ORI
891·53
Reh/Amu
48818

00048818

NOT TO BE ISSUED
OUT OF THE LIBRARY.

BOMBAY BRANCH
OF THE
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY.
TOWN HALL, BOMBAY.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 18 July, 2018

AMUSING STORIES,

TRANSLATED FROM THE PERSIAN

BY

EDWARD REHATSEK,

48818

PUBLISHED BY

DÁMODAR BÁBULJÍ KIRKÉ.

DX-929

BOMBAY:

PRINTED AT THE BOMBAY PRICE CURRENT PRESS.

1871.

00048818

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

The "Amusing Stories" now published were mentioned by me in my preface to the Two Tales surnamed "Fortune and Misfortune," and were likewise translated from the *Shamsah-va-Quhquhah* of *Mirza Berkhordár Turkmán*, not however at random, but selected from various portions of the original work.

In elegance and beauty of style the *Shamsah* considerably surpasses the general run of prose compositions, and is difficult enough to repel any one who has not acquired a tolerable knowledge of Persian by a regular course of study, or at least to cause much trouble and fatigue to persons who can neither read fluently nor discover the significations of words and metaphorical expressions promptly. Not only general readers who merely wish to while away an hour pleasantly, but also students to whom the Persian style is a curiosity and a novelty, may derive much benefit and aid by perusing the original work in connection with "Fortune and Misfortune" and with these "Amusing Stories" in both of which I have rendered difficult idiomatic expressions into as literal English as the language admits of without trenching too closely on the absurd.

Should anybody ask why I have translated merely selections and not the whole work? The reply is, that these appeared more interesting, and that it is not

likely any man would be willing to risk the publica
of a large book the sale of which would be uncer
and the loss nearly certain. Even in little books
the present the publisher is glad if he can cover
the expenses of printing, and he considers himself
successful if a small margin of profit is left. Such
the case in Bombay where neither the English readin
public is great, nor the demand for this species of book
is considerable; and therefore, rather than that th
Shamsah should remain altogether unknown, some po
tions of it are now given to the public.

EDWARD REHATSEK.

CONTENTS.

PAGES.

STORY I.

How a trade saved a certain prince from the grasp of a God-forgetting Jew 1

STORY II.

An undutiful offspring is the rust on the mirror of trouble 7

STORY III.

The utility of politeness and modesty 12

STORY IV.

Mahmood the Gaznavide and Ayaz 16

STORY V.

Politeness is a ring which may be fitted to the finger of any disposition 18

STORY VI.

Dream of king Malak Shah 19

STORY VII.

The youth from Ispahan escapes being killed 21

STORY VIII.

Abid Kermani and Khojah Hassan the merchant 30

STORY IX.

Pharao, the chain of whose life was snapped asunder in consequence of the tornado of the complaints of a poor woman 34

STORY X.

The Khakan of China and the Keyser of Room 37

STORY XI.

The Shepherd and the Lord Jesus 39

PAGE

STORY XII.

A dissolute man awakened from the heavy and bewildering sleep of indifference, by the conversation of a child .....

STORY XIII.

When a wise man sees the green trees, he perceives in each leaf the finger of God 42

STORY XIV.

The Kazi of Ghaznin..... 51

STORY XV.

Stratagem will sometimes effect what main force cannot accomplish 5

STORY XVI.

Policemen outwitted by a thief 6

STORY XVII.

A person who presumes too much upon his own shrewdness often knocks the helmet of self-importance on his own head 65

STORY XVIII.

The nails of advice of a lunatic have untied the knots of grief from the heart of Zain ul Arab 66

STORY XIX.

Who does not keep his promise will fare like Hamed of Bosrah.. 70

STORY XX.

The simple-minded Arab and the Emperor Nushirván 83

STORY XXI.

King Corneel, injured by the machinations of a fox 86

STORY XXII.

Those who are contented with their condition, and do not covet anything, will not be disappointed 100

PAGES.

STORY XXIII.

The woman and the wind 107

STORY XXIV.

The envious Vizier punished 110

STORY XXV.

Envy veils and tarnishes all good qualities..... 116

STORY XXVI.

The three deceitful women..... 125

STORY XXVII.

The cunning owl and the simple falcon 147

STORY XXVIII.

Sometimes powerful men are out-witted in the same way as the little bird cheated the gardener..... 154

STORY XXIX.

Who confides in a low and cunning person, is likely to fare like the lion who trusted the cat 158

AMUSING STORIES.

STORY I.

In ancient times there was in the country of Aderbaijan a king who cherished wisdom and administered justice, the tiller of his equity loving nature kept the garden of his kingdom always clean of the chaff and trash of oppression, and preserved with the light of the torch of high-mindedness and largesses, the surface of the breast of those that hoped and solicited, from the darkness of hardship and destitution. By means of his discernment he became acquainted with the worth and station due to men of profession, and always honored the high polish of the speculum of accomplishments and perfections with the throne of dignity and the place of respect. One day whilst he was sitting in the palace of pomp and splendour, dispensing justice and retribution, and engaged in diving into the depths of the circumstances of the people; two men took hold of the collar of complaint, one of them had no trade, and the other was skilful and accomplished, and although the one who had no trade brought forward arguments and evidences in support of his claim, and it became clear that he was in the right, the king purposely turned the scales in favour of the clever fellow, and ordered the man without a trade to be punished. The king happened to have a vizier equal to Plato in science, and who always drew upon the leaves of the book of circumstances with the pen of propriety of opinion, and prudence of arrangement. Wondering at the decision of the king, he rose from his place and said: "O thou leader of the caravan of prosperity

of realms, by the blows of whose world conquering scymitar the peace of the breasts of opponents is destroyed, and from the fruits of whose convoy of success the countries of the hearts of the amicable are made populous and flourishing; I have a request to make: first that the skyward flying Homai* of your gracious disposition may pervade the atmosphere of compliance with my solicitation, the king said; "Explain;" the vizier answered: "I pray that the life of this innocent youth, whose guiltlessness must be visible upon the mirror of Your Majesty's mind, may be spared for my sake; and that it might be disclosed to me, why Your Majesty pardoned the guilty and condemned the innocent men?" The King said: "I have absolved him, whom you call guilty, because I have arrived at the certainty that he is unblameable and has the right on his side, I also have reason to believe that this is not the proper time to elucidate the matter, but it will be done as soon as we are alone." A short time afterwards the tree of the assembly shed the leaves and fruits of its multitude; the lamp of the apartment of privacy was trimmed and made bright, when the king spoke: "Thou quint essence of acuteness, something happened to me once which plunged me into the sea of astonishment; since that time I made a vow to show favour to a man who has a profession even if he should be blameworthy otherwise; and to punish and persecute him, who has no trade or occupation, even if he should be my own son; so that the high and the low, seeing this, be induced to teach their children trades in conformity with their circumstances; because labour is to simple and gentle a refuge from misfortune and a means to attain prosperity. Know thou, that when my father was yet walking in the garden of life, and was sitting upon the throne of happiness and government; on a certain day those who were present at the audience, were discussing the advantages of trades and accomplishments, and although I had made myself acquainted with several sciences and accomplishments befitting a royal prince,

* Bird of happy omen, it never touches the ground and every head it overshades will wear a crown.

I was anxious to learn yet some other trade; I determined that each of the tradesmen established in the city, should display his skill before my eyes, in order that I might apply myself to any trade which should captivate my fancy; after having seen them, no one pleased me so much as mat-making, because the master of that art had introduced into the specimen which he worked, all sorts of pretty figures; the instructor was engaged and I was taught, I assisted every day, until I became skilful in this business. One day I happened to entertain a desire of making an excursion of pleasure on the sea, I took leave of the king and embarked on board a boat with a number of courtiers, we amused ourselves for two days with fishing, but as all mortals are subject to the vicissitudes of fortune, on the third day a dreadful storm arose, the sea was lashed by it into furious waves, our boat went to pieces and my companions became food for the palate of the whole of destiny; I was floating about on a broken plank with two of my associates for several days, erring like chaff in the ebb and tide of the abyss, and having our throats choked every moment by the gripe of mortal fear; we humbled and turned ourselves to the foot-stool of the answerer of prayers, because nobody ever besought him in vain; by his favour the wind drove the broken plank towards the shore, and all three of us, having landed safe and sound, made our way to an oasis which contained various fruits, and aromatic plants numerous beyond conception; we disported ourselves several days in that place, and during the night we took refuge on the trees, for fear of rapacious beasts, until we reached the end of the oasis and entered the desert, through the ups and downs of which we progressed for several days till the guide of our destinies led us into the city of Bagdad. I possessed several rings of great value, and went to the bazaar in the company of my friends in order to purchase food; having sold a ring we entered the shop of a cook, who had displayed a variety of dishes, and in whose service a handsome boy was busying himself; we handed to him a few dirhems to obtain some victuals; he cast a glance at us and said: 'Young men! nobility and greatness shine from your foreheads, in this city

it is considered disgraceful that youths like yourselves should be eating their food in the bazaar; in the neighbourhood there is a very beautiful room, to which people like you are accustomed to resort, do me the favour to adjourn to that place, that I may send there something worthy of you.' He sent his boy with us, whom we followed; after a short time we arrived at the house, stept into the porch and entered the mansion, which we found to be very neat, and variously ornamented; we wished to remain there, the boy however opened the door of another apartment and affirmed it to be a very pleasant place; I entered it with my companions, and we were beginning to amuse ourselves by contemplating the exquisite and wonderful paintings that ornamented its walls, when the boy said: 'I am going to bring you your meal;' as soon as he was gone the floor of the house began to move as if a great earthquake had happened, we wished to take to our heels, but the pavement separated, and all three of us were precipitated into a subterraneous well which was dark like the graves of infidels and black like their hearts. We lost all hope and were ready to die; we said: This time our adverse fortune has let fly the arrow of a strange event, and we, have fallen into an uncommon place of destruction, so that the signification of our rescue will become as word without meaning like the name of the fabulous bird Unka.

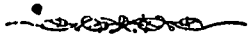
That cook happened to be a Jew and an enemy of Mahommedans; it was his habit from a long time to make use of those compliments in order to decoy Mussulman foreigners to that house, whom he threw into that well, roasted their flesh and sold it to other Mussulmans. Our necks were pledged in this affair and we were in expectation what turn it would take; when the same youth descended into the depth of the well, having a sword in his hand, and wanted to murder us, then we said to him: Friend! What advantage is going to accrue to you from killing us unhappy wretches! If gain be your object, we know the trade of mat-making which is very profitable in this town; bring the tools neccessary for that occupation to this place, and we will make a mat every day; the wretch hastened away

and informed his master of our intention; they provided us with the required materials, we made a mat, for which they threw down to us every day a loaf of barley-bread. We were continuing in this state for some time, and were despairing of our condition, when a stratagem occurred to me; I finished a mat with all possible care and ornaments, and wove into its borders the description of my circumstances in the Arabic language. This happened during the reign of Harun Alrashid, so I said if this carpet were to be offered to the Khalif a considerable sum might be gained; the greediness of the Jew having become an obstacle to his circumspection and to his regard of consequences, he carried the mat to the palace of the Khalif; who highly approved of it, but after he had examined it more minutely he discovered the explanation round its borders, and having by the perusal of it, arrived at the state of things, he asked the Jew where he got the mat from, and whose work it is? he answered: 'I have a friend in Busra who sent it to me;' the Khalif said: 'Wait a little, that I may present thee with a reward worthy of it.' Having called for a servant he whispered something into his ear, the servant left, and having delivered me and my companions from the well, carried me to Harun. As soon as the Jew perceived us he began to tremble, the Khalif asked: 'Who are these.' The Jew struck with his hand the ring of the door of negation and said: 'I do not know.' The Khalif ordered the instruments of torture to be brought forward; when the Jew heard this, he confessed every thing. Harun commanded the Jew to be suspended upon the tree of punishment, and the poison of perdition to be poured into the throat of his existence. My prudent plan was highly approved of, I was sent to the bath and presented with rich clothes; the Khalif asked me about my adventures, which I related to him from beginning to end; and as the long service of my father had laid the Khalif under obligations to him, and as the Khalif knew that I was the apple of the eye of that monarch, he was the more kind to me and said: 'Be of good cheer! Please God we will help you to go to your country.' After having entertained me for several days he presented me with nearly

ten strings of camals and all sorts of articles which are necessary or useful to Grandees, and despatched me with fifty men and a letter to my father, to my own country. When I arrived in my own capital the corpse of my father was just being carried out of the city. After having mourned over the death of my father I established myself upon the throne of dominion. Although my peace was for some time in jeopardy from the misfortune just mentioned, nevertheless it is by the help of a trade that I was saved. I have perfect confidence in skilful men and I have decided always to honor men that have a profession, and to despise those that have none."

Of the blossoming of the aromatic plants of this narrative, and of the performance of this symphony the gist is this: that if the honey of a profession, causes the palate of the well-being of princes to participate in the sweets of its advantages and consequences, how much more useful must it be to others, seeing that princes although their need of the fruit of the tree of accomplishments is not so great, still it happens that a profession becomes to them the cause of the setting up of the volume of their prosperity. Therefore it is necessary that fathers should as much as possible endeavour to ornament the house of the profession of their children with the goods and chattels of accomplishments; and it is also incumbent upon children to take the coverlet of the kindness of their parents upon their back of obedience and submission, and not to draw one breath without their consent. Thrice happy is the child, which by willing obedience causes his father and mother to rejoice, and which is aware that the frontispiece of the good qualities of children is the love borne towards them by their parents. The endeavours to obtain the good graces of the parents are the key to the portal of salvation and the breeze of the rose-grove of prosperity; and the principal duty of children is to strengthen the fountation of the edifice of obedience due to their progenitors lest they should become like a thorn in their foot of peace, or like a saw to the tree of their reputation and good name. An undutiful offspring is the rust on the mirror of trouble, and it's darkness in the company of the kind-

ness of parents. They prefer strangers to such children, may they rejoice in their destruction, and turn away from them the face of love and compassion, like a certain king.



STORY II.

ONCE upon a time there was a king, whose son was a stranger to the laws of obedience due to a father, he was the bosom friend of folly and low sentiments; as the king was unable to straighten the crooked tree of his perverse nature by the arm of strength or of discipline, and as he had ascertained that there was no light in the candlestick of his good disposition; he once for all turned away the face of love from his son and adopted in his stead the son of one of his slaves, the rosetree of whose existence was fructified by the water and the air of the vernal abode of intelligence and knowledge; he cherished him in the cradle of education and on account of the appearance of his worthiness he opened every day the door of inquiry to him; but as the dust of an imperfect understanding hinders the mirror of the female mind from distinguishing the difference between good and bad qualities; the mother of that unfortunate boy, who was one of the uppermost and most beloved in the harem of the king, was greatly displeased at this, she very often wrinkled the forehead of approval and displeasure, and lighted the lamp of the following complaint in the mansion of doubt, and said to the king: "That boy has no other fault besides that of being my son, you prefer to him the son of a slave, on whom you heap various royal favours, and you do not care anything for the darling of my heart." The king answered: "You are right in affirming that I show more love to the son of a slave than to your child, because I am convinced that the former is more worthy of kindness than the latter; for, although the existence

of a well disposed child is a shining torch on the road of delight and pleasure of his father, nevertheless a stranger is many degrees better than a son who does not care to obey and please his father, nor to act rightly.

VERSES.

A child is the ornament in the garden of prosperity,
It illuminates the assembly of felicity.
Its existence becomes dear
When it kindles the flame of goodness.
If a child be as bright as the noon-day-sun
And is disobedient, turn away your face from it.
The edifice of the fame and name of ancestors
Is given to the winds by the misdeeds of children.
A stranger is better than a son
Who makes his father unhappy.

I have not disregarded the laws of kindness towards him, but his nature being contrary to all humane dispositions, I have closed to him the eye of friendliness.

VERSES.

A son who proves himself unworthy and mischievous
Is a tree, barren of the fruit of good qualities.

Men of knowledge have compared children to the members of their bodies, and they consider that a member which is more useful than another, is more precious. The existence of a child is dear and joyful, but if it be without the ornament of good diposition, is like an eye, void of the light of vision." The queen said: "All this is the opinion of Your Majesty, I do not know of what my child is guilty, which might seem displeasing and marring the sight of Your Majesty's friendly inclination towards him." The king said: "He is a good child, who, having followed in every respect the orders of his father acts alway in accordance with propriety and good feeling; I may try as much as I like, I cannot remember a single act

of your child which is deserving of our praise; if you do not believe my words we will make a trial of both these boys, and whatever may be the result of it, you will be able to judge by yourself of the qualities of your son, and which of them both is more worthy to be loved." The king called a servant-maid ordered her to go to the apartments of both, and to see in what occupation each of them was engaged. He told her to ask each of them separately the following question: "If I should bring you one day the news that you are to become king what would you give me in reward of the good tidings?" And to report to him the answer of both. The girl went in the first instance to that ill-favoured son and saw that his habitation and nest was in the greatest state of disorder; there was tied a ram and a monkey, and several cocks and pigeons were strutting about, and a great deal of dirt was amassed from their offals; and the prince himself was playing with the puppies of a dog; as soon as he perceived the maid, he jumped up and began joking, asking her where she had been. She said: "I came to offer you my best wishes, that you should soon take the place of your father on the throne of government, because during his reign I did not see much good, perhaps when your turn comes, the evening of my reverses will be transformed into the morning of prosperity." The prince answered: "It is well; manifest your wishes." The girl continued: "Oh greatest of Royal Princes! Should it happen that the diadem of royalty be glorified by your existence, and I should bring you the first tidings; with the honey of what favour would you sweeten the palate of my pretension?" The young Ameer began to be glad and said: "If this wish becomes realised and you bring me the news of this fortunate event, I shall make you the first lady of my Harem, and overwhelm you with donations of gold and jewels. The girl took leave, went to the adopted son of the king, and saw that he was sitting with all becoming dignity on a chair, and several persons and slaves were respectfully standing around him waiting on him with the hands on their breasts. He asked the girl about her business, to which she replied: "I approach Your Royal

Highness with the intention of making my obeisance; indeed if the eyes of the great were not so illuminated how could they partake in the happiness of meeting Your Highness. The wonderful acuteness of the reigning monarch has been very lucky in gaining such a precious jewel as yourself. There is no one more worthy to succeed him, than one endowed with such nobility of sentiment and greatness of mind like yourself. Oh Royal Prince! Since His Majesty's own son has been rejected on account of his mean nature, it appears that in all probability after the demise of the king the royal seal is to be fitted on your finger; should I become the messenger of this propitious event, what will be my reward?" The boy, having struck the wrinkle of reprobation on the forehead of wrath, exclaimed: "Unthinking, foolish, illnatured girl! What nonsensical and crazy talk is this? It may happen (which God forbid) that such a misfortune will befall His Majesty, but if I do expect it, what difference is there between me and his enemies? Royalty and dominion are welcome to him, who enjoys them; the increase of the freshness of the king's rose-garden of life and strength, is the height of my wishes and the sum of all my desires. If you ever bring to me so unpleasant a piece of news, you will for ever remain rejected from my presence."

The girl waited upon the king and represented the circumstances, in which she had found both of them. After this the king had both of them invited into his presence; his natural son arrived without the least ceremony, sat down by the side of the king and without waiting for a question, commenced to talk impolitely and to play foolish tricks. The adopted son remained at a respectful distance, and made the accustomed bow. The king addressed them in the following words:—"You both are my children and I do not make any difference in the love which I bear to you. Now you are to betake yourselves to the treasury, and each of you is to choose for himself that, which he deems most precious." They obeyed the behest of their father, the son of the slave selected the Qorán; a sword, and one dirhem; the son of the king chose a string of pearls of great

value, with ten purses of gold and a guitar. They returned to the king and showed to him their choice. The king said: "In the treasury there are many more precious articles than these, how could you be satisfied with these?" The king's son answered: "Although I looked about much, still I could not find anything more precious than this string of pearls or this guitar. Of the string of pearls I shall make an ornament for my diadem, and the trace-leaving nail of the guitar I intend to use, for undoing the knot of my heart's grief; and with the match of this gold I will kindle the flame of pleasure for myself." The other boy said: "May the verses of the most glorious book become the hope of Your Majesty's life! I could not discover anything better than the word of God and this scimitar, the reading of the former ennobles us in this world and prepares us for eternity, the use of the latter is a bulwork and protection to the body, and averts the attacks of enemies." The king said: "Let each of you reveal the inmost desire of his heart, that it may be gratified." The Royal Prince thus gave vent to his feeling: "It is not long since the king of Khata presented Your Majesty with a beautiful girl, I desire to impart freshness to the rose-garden of youth from the spring of pleasure, which I would enjoy with her, and with a few bottles of wine." The other boy said: "I beseech Your Majesty that the captives may be released, and that the taxes imposed upon the people may be diminished this year; further that the charger sent to Your Majesty by way of a gift from the Sultan of Arabia, may be entrusted to me for safe-keeping for Your Majesty." The king said: "So let it be." When they were gone the king thus addressed the queen: "Be impartial and say which of the two is in your own opinion more sensible and prudent?" The queen answered: "Your Majesty is right."

In fine, the star of the ability and accomplishments of the slave-born boy increased day by day, and so did the king's favour to him. The worthless Royal Prince was enticed away from the service of the king by his unmeasured love of dissipation and profligacy, and by the company of vagrants in which he delighted; the mind of the king became so alienated from

him, that his name being once blotted out from the volume of friendly regard, he remained excluded from compassionate consideration. After the eclipse of his bad fortune had entirely covered the face of the star of his respectability, he left the city in the society of vagabonds, and went to another country, where he exercised the profession of a highway-robber, until at last he was annihilated at the signal of the punishing sword of destiny; while the prosperity of that other boy was so augmented in consequence of his wisdom and knowledge that he became the king's favourite minister, and succeeded him at his death.

STORY III.

The utility of politeness and modesty.

In the city of Bagdad several children were playing in the street when the Ameer of that place was passing on horseback; as the signs of the pomp and circumstance of dominion came in sight, one of those children, moved by intelligence, his teacher, civilly retreated and placed himself near the wall, while the other boys, heated by the intensity of their occupation, took no notice of the potentate; and since the discerning mind of the great is like a touchstone which discovers the faults and perfections of many things, and they are able to inform themselves about the circumstances of every body; the Ameer was agreeably surprised by the prudent move of that boy, he drew the reins of his horse and having cast a friendly glance at him, took a ring from his finger and threw it among the children, and said: "Whoever will bring first this ring, will enjoy royal favours;" the children ran helter-skelter to obtain the ring, and one of them snatching it up, delivered it into the hands of the Ameer. The boy near the wall, unwilling to

transgress the bounds of propriety and self-possession, did not move from his place.

VERSES.

Whoever puts into the eye of modesty the collyrium of politeness,
Sees the beauty of his beloved unveiled.

The prince, having guessed the boy's motive, again threw the ring, but so as to cause it to fall very near him. The boy took it up, and cleaning the dust off presented it with great composure and politeness; the Ameer replied in the following:—

VERSES.

Civility advances its cultivator
To the zenith of greatness and prosperity,
Whoever plucks one flower from the garden of politeness,
The tree of his joy will become refreshed.
The consequence of civility will ever be good
And uncivility will be crushed by reprobation.

He made a present to every child and ordered one of his attendants to induce the parents of that boy to give him up, because he showed capacity for instruction.

STROPHE.

If a boy be intelligent and virtuous,
It is a pity if he is not educated.
If the ray of knowledge does not shine into the breast,
The abundance of science cannot descend into it.
If a ruby is not polished
It cannot become the ornament of a royal crown.

It happened that the boy's father was dead; his mother was an old woman whose most ardent prayer it was that somebody would educate him. The Ameer ordered a sum of money to be given to the old woman; he was taken to the Ameer's palace, who gave him the name of Firuzbukht, and caused him to be instructed till he arrived at perfection; in consequence of the

royal will as well as of his natural talents and diligence he becamemaster of many accomplishments, and principally of horsemanship and warlike exercises; he rose daily more and more in the good opinion of his prince.

The Ameer had an enemy who was obstinate and powerful, kept the bow of pain always stretched, and grasped with his fist the sword of contention; the Ameer was constantly on his guard of him, and as he was meditating the subjugation of Bagdad with a numerous army, the Ameer who was engaged in providing for this emergency by assembling his soldiers and accumulating the materials of war, intended to command his army in person; but Firuzbukht came forward and said:

VERSES.

Oh God! As long as the heavens revolve
May the time of thy existence have a firm footing.
May the propitious star of my Lord always
Remain shining in the constellation of royalty.
May Your Majesty sit on the throne of prosperity,
This is the wish of your humble servant.

My Lord! How could such a worthless enemy deserve that Your Majesty should so far degrade yourself as to enter personally into a contest with him? It is the request of your humble servant to be allowed to avert this event. Should I, by the favour of the fortunate prestige of my Lord become victorious, the height of all my desires will be attained, or else, permit me to sacrifice my life in this affair, and to become linked to the ranks of the blessed saints, and to obtain happiness in both worlds.

VERSES.

How happy is the life of the man
Who saves that of his benefactor.
God is pleased with the worthy servant
Who sacrifices himself for his master.

The Ameer took leave of Firuzbukht, and the latter having made a sortie from the fortress, valliantly met the enemy on the

battlefield and the flame of strife and contention having commenced to blaze, he fought, till the dawn of victory rose from the orient of his desire; and having thrown the fire of dispersion and extirpation into the ranks of the enemy, he struck the kettle drum of good news and victory, and returned joyfully to the Ameer. His master embraced him, overwhelmed him with caresses, and entrusted him with the highest authority.

VERSES.

A servant who does great things
Bears away the palm of victory.
If you wish that people should put you in their eyes like collyrium
Serve the people, and obey the laws.

The moral of this story is: that modesty and politeness are the ladder by which the palace of high dignity is ascended. By travelling on the road of civility the mansion of all good gifts may be reached. From the rose bush of modesty we may pluck the odorous plants of all our wishes.

The most intelligent and wise men have asserted, that any individual wishing to succeed in the intercourse with his fellow-beings, must first learn the laws of civility and modesty that he may acquire the science of living as he ought; because politeness is the diadem that embellishes the cranium of humanity;

VERSES.

Civility is a crown of divine light
Place it on your head and go wherever you like,
Because it is the pioneer on the road of prosperity,
It is the king sitting on the throne of felicity.

The watchers in the oratory of shrewdness, and the constant attendants in the temple of intelligence, who have opened for themselves the portals of eternal victory with the keys of the dogmata inherited by them from successive ages, have in conformity with the requisition of wisdom (their well meaning di-

rector), guarded the collar of their choice, from being grasped by the fist of passionate desires, and have found the collyrium of politeness to be the promoter of good morals in appearance and in reality, they have also experienced, that unless they were mounted upon the refulgent charger of this precious doctrine, they could never attain the Kaba* of excellence and high degree of dignity.

VERSES.

He may travel without danger on the road to happiness,
Who has in his hand the walking-stick of civility.

In fact, whoever wishes to drink of the cheering wine of superiority and respect, and whoever is desirous to fructify the rose-garden of his dignity and importance, must rub off from the looking glass of his mind the dust of impudence like Agar, that the stature of his excellence may become clothed with the costly robe of honor and glory, and that the blessing of his presence may be acceptable and delicious to the palates of the high and of the low.

STORY IV.

The Homai of the Zenith of eloquence (to viz: the pen skilled in jotting down the subtleties of the world of events) thus spreads out his wings in describing thefo llowing narrative:— that, Sultan Mohammed the Gaznavide having one day mounted the charger of dominion, proceeded with a numerous company of soldiers to the desert for the purpose of hunting; when they had arrived at the place of their destination, a Homai was

seen flying above their heads. It is known that upon whose head the shadow of this bird passes, he will meet with prosperity and abundant blessings. The company scrambled from the right and left and impelled their horses, trying to overreach each other, Ayaz only was an exception to this disorder; he took hold of the skirts of modesty and never lost from his hands the leading-string of self-possession, but remained steady in one place. One of the Sultan's courtiers asked him how it came to pass that he made no effort to obtain such good luck, by striking the ball of conformity with his friends? Ayaz answered: "Servants of firm principles deem it at variance with the laws of their duty and service, to contemn the customs of civility, and they esteem it highly improper to lose in this way the reins of the horse of modesty from the grasp of wilfulness; the dress of civility is more becoming to my breast than the shadow of the Homai to my head. The protecting shadow of his favour who covers the pinnacle of my hopes is sufficient for me, so that I am not in need of the shadow of the Homai." The Sultan had perceived the quiet demeanor of Ayaz, and was much pleased with it; when they returned from the hunting party, he greatly praised Ayaz, granted him various favours, and continued to cherish him in the cradle of his affection until at last he became one of the most intimate courtiers of his master; and the ring of the arrangement of affairs fitting the finger of his expertness, and diligence, he became the prime minister of the Sultan.

VERSES.

Whose goblet overflows from the pure wine of civility,
He is like the sun, a crown to the inhabitants of the world.

Politeness is a ring which may be fitted to the finger of any disposition, and he who possesses it, may prance about on the war-horse of his superiority in any battlefield.

STORY V.

One day the guardian of the treasury of good manners and of perfection, namely Ayaz, was on duty near the person of Sultan Mohammed; all of a sudden he struck his foot with such force to the ground that the Sultan noticed it, but having never before experienced such a breach of manners, he purposely sent Ayaz out on some other service, and said to the bystanders: "From the time that Ayaz is drinking at the pure fountain of our service he never attempted such a transgression of the proprieties and of modesty; what could be the reason of such a demeanour?" He sent a menial to inquire, who discovered Ayaz in the act of killing a black scorpion which was in his stocking; the servant asked, was this scorpion in your stocking? Ayaz answered: "This scorpion was the cause of my ill-behaviour in the presence of the Sultan; it had stung me forty times, and the etiquette of propriety allowed me not to withdraw my foot from the region of good manners and to manifest impatience, until having lost the bridle of self-possession from the hand of my endurance, I became subject to the imputation of so ill-mannered a move, so that as long as my life lasts the face of my circumstances will always remain wounded from the inundating torrent of shame with which this accident has overwhelmed me." This having been brought to the notice of the Sultan became an occasion for the refreshment of his rose-garden of consideration towards Ayaz, whom he exalted and cumulated with royal favours.

VERSES.

The throne of respectability is attainable by civility,
The uncivil will never reach the desired object.

STORY VI.

Sultan Malak Shah of the dynasty of the Saljukides dreamt one night that the pearlstring of his teeth had become torn, and all of them had fallen out. When the Sultan awoke in the morning he was under great apprehension and laboured with fear in consequence of this dream; he ordered a sooth-sayer to be brought forward to interpret it, this was done, but the sooth-sayer although skilled in his art, was so inflated by pride and self-importance that he considered the Lord Joseph himself as a mere apprentice in his school of perfection. The Sultan explained the dream to him, but that unwise interpreter, instead of proceeding in the matter with discretion and discernment abruptly said: "This dream indicates that all the relatives of Your Majesty will die all at once in your presence." This sudden and disagreeable news offended the Sultan, and being over-powered by his anger he ordered the sooth-sayer to be suspended on the gallows of punishment and the robe of life to be torn from his breast. After this he again commanded, that another person, skilled in this art should be brought into his presence. A second sooth-sayer made his appearance, to whom the Sultan detailed his dream. But as this second interpreter was aware of the customs of good society, and knew the manners of the great, the stature of his exquisite disposition was perfectly beautified by the many coloured robe of good manners and modesty. He began to speak with the tongue of discernment and precaution, saying: "May perpetual happiness be the humble slave of the heaven-supported threshold of Your Majesty as long as the nightingale of sleep takes her abode of rest in the leafy nest of the eyes, and as long as the rosebud of love is exhilarated by the cheering breeze of the spring of beauty. Though God who knows what is hidden and revealed, is aware of all secrets, and nobody except the prophets and Imams have

knowledge of these affairs, nevertheless, according to the circumstances of the case, and the opinions of those who are acquainted with the rules of this art, the dream of my Lord prognosticates a long life, because the adepts in this pursuit have declared that the teeth mean children and relatives. Hence it appears that Your Majesty is to be distinguished by length of life and is to outlive all your connexions and relatives." The Sultan was greatly pleased by this fair explanation, made him valuable presents, and turning towards the assembly said: "What the first interpreter said is quite in conformity with the declaration of the second, and the light of both speeches is derived from the lamp of the same meaning, but the former was so conceited with his own importance that he addressed me very impolitely, and consequently became the target of the arrow of destruction, and the latter being acquainted with the secrets of modesty and politeness, spoke with deliberation and obtained his meed of praise and reward."

The moral of this tale is, that the road of speech is uneven and fraught with danger, and that nothing is to be uttered without due deliberation. Speaking is often a source of strife and contention, whereas silence is very seldom followed by bad consequences.

VERSES.

Two ears, and but a single tongue,
By nature's law to man belong:
The lesson she would teach is clear,
Repeat but half of what you hear.

He is perfect who does not suffer himself to be deceived by the Satan of sinful inclinations, and does not condemn others as long as he discerns, the spectre of errors in the mirror of his own circumstances, nor attempts to tear the veil of the good reputation of other people with the hand of carelessness, as long as the field of his own desires is in need of the refreshing

shower of Divine grace; lest he should put the saw of danger to the foot of the tree of his own repose, and the surface of his equanimity having become disturbed by the events of time, his name should be blotted out from the volume of the prosperous like that of the wife of Khoja Hamid of Armagan, who bent her whole mind to acquire the property of the youth of Ispahan, became entangled in the snare of evil desires, and forfeited her life.

STORY VII.

In ancient times several men, uniters of the leaves of conformity in the volume of friendship, who were connected with each other on the tablet of intercourse as words are with their signification; and keeping the rose-garden of amity blooming and refreshed by the breezes of union and love, they erected in the camp of intimacy de flag of friendship. By the direction of love, their guide, they started on a journey from the capital Ispahan, to Khorasan; they tied the luggage of intention and the litter of desire upon the camel of motion and seated themselves under the escort of mutual esteem into the Hauda of trust in the Most High. After many days journeying they arrived in Damgan, stopped there for a few days to transact some affairs; and having left that place also, they continued their travels; but after they had proceeded only a few Farasangs,* one of them remembered that he had forgotten a purse of gold in their lodging at Armagan; he informed his companions of this, and of his intention to return and fetch it; they wished to go with him but he declined, and begged of them to go on till the next stage, and there to wait for him, because

* Farasang is 4 English miles.

he would soon be back again. He took leave of his friends and departed in the direction of Armagan. The time passed; it became midnight and morning, but the youth rejoined them not. When the burnisher of the speculum of existence had furbished off the rust of darkness and night from the surface of the mirror of this world, and the world illuminating Belle, the sun, had raised from her head the veil of concealment, and having left the Harem of retirement placed her foot in earnest on the race-course of appearance; the friends were greatly disturbed and embarrassed at the absence of their companion, till one of them, the palate of whose condition had been sweetened by the honey of love and attachment for that youth, scratched the face of patience with the nail of uneasiness, and said to his companions: "The loss of the presence of that dear friend has made me restless, and I suspect that the boat of his circumstances has fallen into difficulty from the tempest of the sea of misfortunes. Whatever trouble anybody may take to help a friend in distress, he will never repent of it, and a companion, the garden of whose society communicates to the nostrils the perfume of the blossom of faithfulness, is to be rescued even at the risk of our lives. To meet him again would be the greatest happiness.

VERSES.

The power of a true friend is so great, as to be able to dispel the cares of this world.

Having spoken thus, he started on the road to ascertain the cause of the delay of their friend. After he had travelled a few Farasangs he was rejoiced to encounter their lost companion, and said: "Amiable friend, what untoward event has been the cause of your tarrying?" The youth answered: "Spreader of the carpet of amity! Although I have found what I had lost, I experienced a very unlucky affair, and I saved the dove of my life from the claws of the eagle of a strange event. When I returned to Armagan I found my gold purse and went

away, but as the whale of the sea of the west was ready to swallow the Jonas of the sun, and as the veil of the obscurity of evening covered the face of the golden cheeked sweet-heart of day, I deliberated with myself and considered, that as my companions had now arrived at the halting place, the eagle of the night had commenced flying, and the Homai of the day had retired into the nest of concealment, it would not be prudent to prosecute my journey during the night; but that I should stop in some place till the luminous bud of morn begins to bloom in consequence of the vernal breeze of the arrangement of the Most High, and that I should start again, after the dust of darkness had departed from the surface of existence. I turned the reins of my intention towards a hamlet situated near the highway, and entered it; I was embarrassed where to pass the night, when I stumbled upon one of the villagers to whom I explained my circumstances. He answered: "Young man! I have a house, where the pious may be sheltered, and in which the plate of life is always placed on the table of sincerity, and I am always in attendance and expectation to be delighted in the service of well behaved young men, the sweetness of the fruit of the tree of whose presence would make me happy. Why should not you condescend to illuminate the nest of my desires by the lamp of your presence, and take your place of abode in my poor hut?"

VERSES.

The pupil of my eye is your abode,
Condescend! enter! my house is your house.

The friendly behaviour and invitation of that man put my mind at ease, I got down from my horse, and sat down in the hospitable mansion of his urbanity, and a savoury meal was served up to me; when I had finished it and it was time that the bride of sleep should enter the bosom of the eyes, and the fawn of wakefulness should go astray into the desert of carelessness, my landlord said to me: "Young man! If you have any

silver or gold about you deliver it to my care, for the highwayman of the accidents of this world is always lurking about." For fear, lest the bud of misfortune should blossom for want of precaution. I handed to him the bag which contained about one thousand golden Dinars, after I had sealed it. My host took possession of this deposit, and I established myself on the pillow of rest. After a little while I began to argue with myself what a folly I had committed in entrusting a stranger, whom I had never seen before and with whose circumstances I was not acquainted, with one thousand Dinars without a witness to the transaction; and if he should altogether deny it in the morning by what means could I again obtain the possession of my money? The people of this world are so intoxicated with the wine of dishonesty and ingratitude, that in order to obtain the property of their fellow-beings they study how to deceive each other; children wish to defraud their parents so that they are in need of the intervention of witnesses and legal documents. People transact business with all possible precaution, and frequently they are unable to obtain justice in spite of a hundred Kazis and lawyers. The sparks of my past heedlessness, having thrown my heart into the fiery oven of restlessness, I left the house without loss of time, called the man and said: Though I am convinced of your honesty, and am under no apprehension of being deceived by you I request you to restore to me the money deposited with you. The landlord complied with my demand and returned the bag to me exactly in the state in which he had received it. I buried the gold under ground near the house and went again to bed. After the lapse of one hour I heard sounds in the place where the man slept. I went to the door and heard how the wife reproved her husband, saying: "Foolish and senseless man! Your name should occupy the first place in the book of fools, what a great mistake you have committed! To let slip through your fingers such a good opportunity which now-a-days but seldom happens, and to lose the gold which a stranger gave you in the night and without any witness! By it we might have kept the fire of cheerfulness blazing for years; what could have induced you to

underrate and overlook such good luck, and to retreat from it with empty hands? To gain half a Dinar we are obliged to undergo much trouble, and to taste the poison of many hardships; the upshot of this good windfall ended in nothing, and this only by your fault." The husband, having been aroused by these words, said: "Oh woman! Since the time in which you have placed your head into the circle of compliance with my wishes, all the seeds of exhortation and advice which I have sown in the field of your circumstances, have brought forth nothing but the wormwood of unbecoming tricks! Are you not ashamed to throw aside the veil of prudence and common-sense, in order to disgrace yourself and me by these foolish words and improper remarks? It would be the highest degree of dishonesty and malignity to wish to hurt a young stranger who confides in us, for the sake of gaining a few Dirhems! How could we shut our eyes to the fear of God and the final consequences as if we were unacquainted either with the laws of humanity or justice! To do evil to a guest is against the customs of all nations. God Almighty, to whom no secrets are hidden rewards every act according to its merit. To hurt an innocent person can have no other consequences but shame and repentance in this world and in the next. The treasury of the Most High is full of various gifts, and he grants to everybody, unasked, whatever he deems fit. From every grain of disturbance that you cast into the field of your conscience, you will reap detriment only.

VERSE.

Whatever you do to the world, the world will do to you.

STORY.—It is related, that once upon a time, a man sat in a place, with a stick in his hand. An ant, which had gained with infinite labour and trouble one grain, and was carrying it in its mouth, happened to pass that way; that man opposed his staff to the ant and distressed it, so that it was obliged to drop the grain from her mouth, and to depart without it. This person

had a field, by which the lamp of his living was kept burning; he had gathered in the harvest and housed it, hoping soon to eat from it. Two days afterwards his servant came and reported that the day before, fire had consumed his granary and that not half a grain was left. After the master had considered the truth of the circumstances, he discovered, that the cause of his misfortune was the distress which he had uselessly occasioned to that ant.—Oh woman! The Lord of the eternal world has opened the door of supply of the store-house of his grace, from day to day for every living creature. It is unwise that anybody should for his own advantage, strike the claws of greediness into other people's property, and thus be blotted out from among the number of the innocent and favoured, and be counted with transgressors and evil-doers." The love of gold had taken such possession of the woman, that she considered these exhortations only as useless talk and answered: "Dear husband: Mere assertions have not been, and will never be believed; the gifts from above which you mention, must be coming by themselves, because nobody ever saw Gabriel descend from heaven and bring down silver and gold. This is a practical world, and opportunities like this ought not to be missed. If such a game has of its own accord gone into the snare of the sportsman, and if it be again allowed safely to depart, it only shows the meanness of the hunter. Our poverty clearly indicates the course we ought to pursue: this night, while nobody is aware of the circumstance, we must kill this young man, take his gold, and dispose of his luggage, horse and arms; by this means we may provide for the support of our life." The husband answered: "Wife! Do not say so, even infidels with all their hardness of heart, protect their guests, and are not liable to such malignity. Deeds like this would cause us to be proscribed from all blessings and benefits." When the woman saw that her husband would in no wise lend himself to such a crime, she became silent. As soon as I perceived that the woman was so much bent upon my destruction, I began te fear for my life, and betook myself to the top of a tree that was in the yard among the branches of which I found a hiding place. This woman happened to have

a son by a former husband. The evil disposition of this fellow and his bad character vied with Satan in rascality. He was constantly engaged in evil deeds; more than once life and property had been put in jeopardy by the agency of his hand and tongue, and he was accustomed fearlessly to run the race of criminal actions. That day, as usual, he was impelled by his evil inclinations to play the knight* of confusion and to raise the standard of dissoluteness; he left the house in the morning, and did not return till after midnight in an intoxicated and delirious state. Having entered the house he went to sleep in the very place which I had just abandoned."

The historian relates, that the woman, after her husband had begun to repose in the garden of rest, and was drowned in the ocean of sleep; that paragon of cunning and ill-nature, left the room without the knowledge of her consort, took a large stone and threw it with such force at the head of her own son that the nest of his life instantly fell to pieces, and the bird of his existence fled to the region of death. After this she searched diligently for the bag of gold, but without success; she returned disappointed and uneasy to her husband and informed him of the fact. The man rubbed the hands of expostulation and complaint upon each other, exclaiming: "Oh thou race-horse of the region of evil intentions, and rover in the desert of carelessness and selfishness, this great crime is sure to meet its reward; at last thy obstinate nature has projected thee into the whirlpool of an awful misfortune, and we shall see what flower will bud from the rose-tree of this accident, and what fruit the tree of this event is going to bring faith.

VERSES.

You only lend your actions in this world,
They will be paid back to you no matter when.
Each grain of disturbance which you sow,
Will bring its fruit of distress, and will punish you too.

The woman said: Oh man! Now is not the time to light

* Allusion to the game of chess.

the lamp of exhortation, nor the season of bloom for the bud of advice! Get up, that we may find the bag of gold, and bury the body of the stranger, because the dawn is approaching, and the plate of this secret might be emptied from the roof of disgrace, and the fire of this disturbance might begin to blaze up. The woman went out, and having looked closely, discovered that her own son was drowned in the sea of non-existence; she was about to bewail him, when her husband smiled and said:

VERSES.

You have both, the killing and the consolation.

It is useless now to scratch the face of repentance with the nail of complaint, the end of each business ought to be considered in the beginning."

In fine, both of them having dug a grave, they buried their son that night. The woman returned into the house, despairing and sorry for the death of her son. She destroyed herself by striking her head against the ground. When the melodious bird of morning commenced its sweet song I came down from the tree, and intended to move; the master of the house came out and said: "Virtuous and good natured young man! Forgive me! Something very strange has happened to me, which hindered me to offer you my services at an earlier hour. Although I have great reason to be ashamed of what took place, nevertheless your coming to this place has become an occasion, of great benefits to me. The presence of that unfortunate woman and her wretched son, both of whom were constantly travelling in the desert of perdition and offence to everybody, was a great source of distress to me, and allowed me not to draw one breath in peace; by the plaster of your arrival however the fractures and wounds of my circumstances have been healed, and I have been saved from an irremediable evil. The night, that instigator of sins and evil deeds, had spanned the bow of futility, and intended to project the arrow of iniquity at the target of your circumstances, and to endanger your life.

The grace of God, which is a bulwark to those that fear him, and an avenger of the unfortunate, has thrown that woman and her son, both of whom were endeavouring to annihilate the mirror of the soul of one of God's creatures, into the deep well of perdition. What is to hinder you to tarry one day longer with me, that I may atone to yon for any shortcomings, and ingratiate myself with you, and escort you, lest another attempt be made at your life because

VERSES.

The rich have no greater enemy than property,
The kernel causes the almond to be broken.

On account of this gold something might again happen to you." I answered: "Friend! He who does not deviate from the path of rectitude, need not fear any dangers. Under the guidance of the compassion of God all roads are safe.

VERSES.

The well-being of him is never impeded by obstacles,
Who hastens straight forward to his destination.

I want no escort, my companions are waiting for me in a place which is not far from here, we intend to continue our journey together, and please God I shall soon meet them again. I gave the man a few Dinars and started on the way."

The reason for lighting the lamp of this narrative is, that, the abecedarians of the emporium of the ways and means of this life, should consider the truth of the moral embodied in this story, and place the saw of abscission upon the breast of evil desires, lest their good name and innocence be lacerated by them, and their envious aspirations should precipitate them into the well of disgrace, by causing them to spread out the net of covetousness to entice into it the property of others. He who distinguishes bad actions from good, has always the sword of vengeance in his hand.

VERSES.

If you wish to participate in the prosperity of both worlds,
Be just towards yourself and do wrong to nobody.

In fact, those who range themselves under the flag of virtue, and sound the trumpet of eminence, have made it the leading principle of their lives to consider their fellow-beings as their brothers, for fear of breaking the flagon of hearts with the stone of brutality, and of thus throwing the potsherds of enmity and oppression into the way of those who are compelled to walk barefooted upon the road of destitution and helplessness; for although it may be easy to a man, by means of the ever ready appliances and instruments of oppression to deal out strokes with the club of injury; the sharp scimitar of vengeance will in course of time inflict the most dreadful wounds on his own body, and having tumbled over into the abyss of crime, he will, like Abid Kermani and Khojah Hassan the merchant, never smell the perfume of the flower of peace from the garden of his life.

STORY VIII

In ancient times there was a man of the inhabitants of Kerman, of the name of Abid, who was perpetually taking lessons of ill-nature and boldness in the school of Satan, and was in the habit of burning with the flames of his malignity and dishonesty, the granaries of the peace of mind of high and low. As long as he could, he never quitted the uneven and crooked road of bad temper to walk in the flowery plains of humanity and civility; and as long as he was able to defile his lips with the incongruous nourishment of quarrels, he would not pick up

one crumb from the spread table of friendliness and urbanity. He happened to have a virtuous and pious wife, who was sitting day and night within the drapery of retirement and obedience to her husband, and never for a moment turned her head from the line of compliance with his orders. That despised wretch was constantly embittering the life of his spouse with the coloquinth of moroseness and ill-humour, and was always looking for new opportunities to wound her heart with the sword of recrimination. One day that stranger to the laws of humanity, and victim to the disease of evil desires, entered the house; the sting of lunacy of his malice having ascended into his head, and the kettle of his black disposition overboiling from the fire of his illnature, he knocked out the brains of his unfortunate and innocent wife without any cause whatever. After a little while his wrath decreased and he began to investigate his case with the searching eye of inquiry; he was aware of having committed a great crime, and said: "It is expedient quickly to concoct a plan, lest the tree of this mishap bring forth fruits of shame and disgrace for me. He ran out in a state of distraction, but stopped embarrassed at the door of his house; he did not know to what friend or acquaintance he ought to confide this secret, and with the needle of what remedy he might mend the fissure of this misfortune. Khojah Hassan the merchant, who was an old man, and a well-known shop-keeper of the town, was just passing that way; he hastened towards him and said: "Such and such a thing has happened to me, and the arrow of this misfortune has been projected from the bow of my carelessness, the baneful consequences of it may be remedied by your discriminating judgment; what should hinder you to lift the burden of this event off from my neck?" The old man considered for a while, and then said: "The remedy for you is, that you entice some young stranger into your house, and kill him also, and then raise the hue and cry, that you have surprised your wife in criminal intercourse with a stranger, and that you have killed them both. By this means you will save your neck." After the sinful old man had given him this perverse advice he went his way. That outcaste from the

circle of prosperity remained waiting for somebody to pass; after a short while a young man traversed the street, the sun of whose beauty was arising from the East of loveliness. The tender roses of his cheeks sent abegging the flowers produced in gardens, and the straightness of his stature became the cynosure for the cypress:—

VERSES.

The cheeks of that moon resplendent in the perfection of loveliness,
Made a perpetual spring in the garden of gracefulness.
Suddenly his bewitching eye robbed from the lover,
By the attraction of his glance, consciousness, patience, and rest.
From the sight of his cheek the eye of the rival was illumined,
By the sugar of his lips, the palate of love was delighted.

That malevolent wretch stepped forward, saluted the young man, and having proffered kind invitations said: Young man I have a delicious repast, if you will oblige me with your company I shall be made happy; the more the stranger excused himself the more anxious became his invitation, till the young man gave into the snare; and the wretch having locked the door, cut the thread of life of that flourishing tree of the garden of youth with the shears of malignity; having thrown him near the corpse of his wife he returned to the street, in the middle of which he stopped in order to inform the neighbours and the passers by; at that time Khojah Hassan the merchant, at whose instigation the string of the bow of this diabolic intrigue was stretched, happened again to come that way, when the murderer came running towards him and said: "Enlightened old man! I have put your plan in execution, now it is all made right." They both entered the house, but what was the astonishment of the old man when he discovered the corpse of his own son; he tore his clothes, put ashes on his head, and in his grief he continued to strike his head against the ground till the spring of his life was withered and transformed into the autumn of non-existence, and he became suspended on the gibbet of his own iniquity and evil inspiration.

One of the neighbours however had a window from which everything that happened on the premises, might be observed; a woman saw the whole transaction from beginning to end, and reported it to the authorities. The judge of the city ordered the malefactor to be hung on the tree of punishment, and afterwards the body to be cut into pieces, each of which, was to be exposed in a thoroughfare, so as to be an example and a warning. Khojah Hassan, who furnished that evil-doer with such a nefarious plan, fell himself into the pit which he dug for another, and the malefactor who murdered that innocent woman was drowned in the sea of his bad passions.

The divers in the sea of good principles have threaded all the pearls of good actions upon the string of good morals, and they do not with-hold the sugar of friendly conversation neither from the palate of the rich nor poor, pervading and sweetening all their transactions, they never wound with the lancet of anger or bad humour the breasts of anybody, whether he be bad or good, because the hearts of people are repositories to which corruscations of the lights of the secrets of the next world descend.

VERSE.

If you have oppressed anybody, be sure you will meet your recompense.

To be on a good footing with friends and to help them, will have good consequences in both worlds. Whosoever wounds hearts with the dagger of hardships the liver of his own well-being will become a target for the multifarious arrows of revenge. Every careless person that throws the thorns of detriment into the road of the barefooted, the freshness of the rose-bush of his own garden of prosperity will be withered by the autumnal blasts of righteous retribution.

VERSES.

No one can draw advantage from breaking hearts,
For the pieces of that broken bottle become diamonds.

Those who belong to the tribe of the intelligent, and drink from the pure fountain-head of salvation by laudable actions, are engaged in sweetening the palates of their fellow-beings with the honey of kindness and love, and do not employ the strong eagle of power and worldly advantage to soar in the atmosphere of tyranny, lest the granary of their life and glory should be struck by the lightning of the sighs and curses of the poor whom they have oppressed, which the wrath of the Lord of destinies will not fail to let fall upon them, as upon Pharaoh, the chain of whose life was snapped in consequence of the tornado of the complaints of a poor woman.

STORY IX.

When Pharaoh that wanderer in the desert of aberration and sinfulness, was putting in motion the chain of persecution to gratify his malicious and perverse disposition; his improvident desire impelled him to build a castle on the banks of the Nile which was to vie with the sun in splendour. Every day several hundred builders with some thousands of labourers were engaged in carrying on the works, and each village was put in contribution to furnish its quota of labourers. One day it happened that a villager fled to avoid the hardships and oppressions, and left his unfortunate and pregnant wife alone in the house; her limbs were almost ready to separate from each other in consequence of poverty and want of food, and her complaints were bitter. The task-masters of Pharaoh came to the hut to fetch her husband, but as they were unable to find him, they forced the unhappy woman to accompany them; the day of her confinement was at hand, and she was delivered of a child on the spot; in that state she was compelled to carry bricks, stones,

and tools. The miserable woman was obliged to obey although she carried her child also; if she relented, those tyrannical wretches threatened and tormented her until she became unable to move, and turned her face towards that discerning, avenging and true Kaba which is the hope of all created beings and said.

PRAYER.

Oh gracious Lord who art one, and without an equal,
The trust of each unfortunate heart is in thy favour,
Thou art the architect of the edifice of equity and justice.
Thy portals are the resting place of the good and the refuge of the weak,
Nobody departs excluded from the store-house of thy bounty.
The object of desires is attained in thy graciousness.
All this oppression with which I met from Pharaoh,
With all thy justice why so much longanimity ?
I hope that you will help me,
Because I am drowned in the sea of oppression.

O Lord I am thy servant, thou seest how the task-masters of Pharaoh persecute me; if I am sinful and unworthy of thy mercy and deserve punishment; this child is innocent; justice is one of the attributes of thy perfection. O thou most compassionate and just, if thou shouldst not think fit to avenge me from this tyrant, to whom shall I complain? Send a remedy to my wounded heart, because thy boundless favour is the only helper of the unhappy and oppressed."

She suffered and worked till evening when she departed to her home. Some days after this event the time had arrived that the sea of the wrath of God should become stormy and that the boat of life and property of Pharaoh should be submerged in the Nile of revenge. This happened, as it is recorded in ancient chronicles; and that infidel and tyrannical wretch travelled by water to the fire place of eternal damnation. On that day the rich and the poor of the inhabitants of Egypt went to the banks of the Nile to see the spectacle; that woman also was among the crowd and was walking near the river side till she came to a place where she perceived something shining on the surface

of the water, she took a long pole and drew the glittering object to herself, and discovered it to be a head, severed from its body, to each hair of which several precious jewels were attached; the woman disentangled all the gems and put them into her lap, when she heard a voice saying: "Woman! If procrastination takes place in the accomplishment of some affairs, it is not because they are forgotten! As the gates of blessings are opened to the pious, so also the means of punishment are at hand for the criminal, and the laws of justice are in operation at all times and always have been; but their application depends from the quality of each action be it bad or good. This is the head of that Pharaoh for whom the castle was built, and even the meanest servants of whom were persecuting you on that day, and now the lightning of thy complaint has struck the granary of his dignity and life; these jewels, each of which is precious as the tribute of a realm, are the wages of one day's labour for you." The woman took care of the jewels, and her husband having returned from his journey, the dark night of their misfortune was changed into the bright day of prosperity.

The moral of this story is, that the edifice of tyranny has no firm foundation and rests on the surface of water, the breeze of complaints of the oppressed shakes it, and over-turns the basis of its existence.

VERSES.

One spark causes the conflagration of a hundred granaries,
From the sighs of the unhappy the field of misery is withered

In fact there is no better preserver and guardian of the garden of life than the bulwark of the fear of God, and good will to all men.

VERSES.

Be on your guard from the curses of the oppressed,
Because of a sudden they destroy kingdoms.

The truth of the foregoing assertions is also confirmed by that which happened to the Khakan of China and the Keyser of Room; those who will extract the cotton of inattention from their ears may perfume the brains of their experience by inhaling the odour of the following narrative.

STORY X.

As it became evident and certain in olden times that the majority of the monarchs of China had measured the road of the domain of existence with the paces of longevity, and that no detriment accrued to their vitality from the deceitfulness of the Sahara* of life, so that they were enabled to enjoy the delights of the banquet of life as they listed, and that they reached the outermost stage of life, and the blasting autumnal wind of death was unable to wither the rose-garden of life even of one of them, while they were in the spring-season of youth; and because the moon of life of the majority of Keysers had been eclipsed by death before they had reached the age of maturity; on account of this fact the curiosity of one of the Keysers, was excited and as much as he tried he could not discover the reason of it, at last he determined on sending an ambassador to the Khakan of China in order to solve this difficulty and addressed the following letter to him: "May the standard of prosperity of the Emperor always portend good omens, may the hand of the autumn of vicissitudes never touch the bloom of the garden of life of that dweller on the seat of magnificence and glory. It has now become certain, that the lives of the pillars of that exalted dynasty are never imperilled during their youth by the insidious tempests of mundane acci-

* Name of a well known desert.

dents; many of the members of our family lose the ready capital of their lives from the hands of their control. As the longed for cause of this circumstance was, and is sitting behind the curtain of concealment in the harem of secrecy, a ray of light has struck the inquiring mind, that it might perhaps be discovered, by shaking the chain of amity. Should the door of the treasury of the coveted information be opened by the key of our supplication, and our assembly be rejoiced by the splendor of the luminary of so excellent a remedy, may Your Majesty condescend to send some of it, that the edifice of our mutual love and intimacy may become strengthened in this respect also." This letter the ambassador carried to China with numerous presents, and having arrived there he obtained an audience of the Khakan to whom he delivered his message and gifts. The Khakan ordered the ambassador and his suit to encamp near a certain tree which was outside the city, and to be supplied with provisions during one week; after the lapse of which the supplies were to be stopped and the entire embassy to be neglected. The ambassador was waiting a long time for the letter which he expected to carry back, and expended all his supplies; many of his followers being reduced to necessity, took to flight, he was almost despairing of receiving an answer; when the Khakan one day happened to pass that way, being engaged in hunting. The ambassador advanced into the middle of the way, began to complain, and prayed to be dismissed. The Khakan answered: "In the place where you are encamped there is a tree, as soon as it falls down you will get your leave." The ambassador having returned said: "What probability is there that a tree of such height should not endure for centuries?" He and the very small number of his suite which had not yet left him were greatly embarrassed by this circumstance, nevertheless they remained until their distress was at its height; they made supplication to the throne of grace to obtain the destruction of that tree, they rested not till the arrow of their prayers had struck the target of response, and a very violent wind having begun to blow, the tree was torn up by the roots all of a sudden. The ambassador for

whom this event became an occasion of great thankfulness, and joy, hastened to make his obeisance to the Khakan, to relate the event, and to beseech him to send an answer. The Khakan said: "The fact of the fall of this tree is itself the answer; go and say to the Keyser that the lamp of life is kept bright by the prayers, and that the thread of existence is served by the complaints of the subjects. If a king cherishes the laws of equity and justice, and studies the welfare of his subjects, the small and the great will pray from the bottom of their hearts for the prolongation of his existence, and he will enjoy the delights and advantages of life; or else if he kindles the fire of oppression and tyranny the simple and the gentle will desire the castle of his life to be overthrown, and the granary of his existence will be destroyed by the thunderbolt of annihilation; you and several others have prayed for the overthrow of this tree, and it was soon cut asunder by the saw of annihilation; it is evident that whenever many people wish the destruction of one individual the vision of his existence will become bleareyed from the dust of non-existence." Having presented the ambassador with a dress of honor and many gifts, he sent him on his way. The ambassador arrived in his country and reported every thing to the Keyser.

The moral of this story is that the tree of each act bears its fruit of reward, and that the breeze of the recompense of each deed is blowing. He may be called prudent, who applies all his faculties to act rightly, and confines the dog of his bad passions with the muzzle of obedience like the wise shepherd, lest the sheep of his flock of peace that are grazing in the pasture of ease, should be dispersed and torn to pieces by the rapacious wolf of evil actions.

STORY XI.

It is related, that when the preacher of the pulpit of prophecy and the nightingale of the garden of liberality, namely Jesus

the son of Mary (upon whom be the blessing of God) had attained the highest rank of superiority, and his precious existence had been fructified to perfection by the water and color of excellence and prophecy, he was one day walking about in the fields and encountered there a youth who was engaged in guarding a flock of sheep. The Lord Jesus said: "Shepherd! It is evident that the Creator has brought into existence the earth, the heavens, and men that they may serve Him and approach the threshold of constant obedience; nor can they become acquainted with godliness and religion unless they be instructed; this knowledge is sought after by the rich and poor, why is it that you do not care for piety in the spring-season of youth, and spend your precious time in roving about in the desert? Why do you not keep up an intercourse with the world and pious people? By it you would obtain the blessing of both worlds and taste the sweets of many benefits." The shepherd said: "Oh prophet of God! What you have said is true; nevertheless I have learned several tenets about God; and some principles of devotion; my whole life is regulated by these, and I am in need of no other information. The Lord Jesus inquired what these were? The shepherd said: "In the first place, as long as the cauldron of the benefits of provisions for each day keeps boiling in the cook-room of divine goodness, I shall never deprive anybody of one crumb of bread. Secondly: as long as the sugar of honesty and righteousness is not consumed, I shall never defile my lips with the wormwood of deception and fraud; and thirdly: as long as there is any fecundity in the rose-garden of lawful things, I shall never place my foot in the thorny abodes of transgression to forbidden and unlawful things, and fourthly: as long as I am able to moisten my palate with the exhilarating wine of friendship, I shall never become subject to the headache of the crapula of enmity." The Lord Jesus said: "Blessed art thou Oh wise man; the knowledge of the ancients and the moderns is embodied in these principles."

If a man is prudent he will disentangle himself from the snares of his passions and will listen to the words of justice, like

that dissolute man who was awakened from the heavy and bewildering sleep of indifference, by the conversation with a child; and was sobered from the drunken unconsciousness of folly.

STORY XII.

In ancient times there lived in Shiraz a man who was dissolute and profligate, he was constantly holding the stirrup of, and following in the train of, obedience to his evil concupiscence, and was always fleeing from the domicile of abstinence and virtue. As long as he was able to roam in the stony and uneven wilderness of misery and sinfulness he would never approach the happy mansion of good deeds; as long as he suspected one mouthful to be left on the table of transgression he would never attempt to reach the banquet of probity. He had a child which was intelligent, the door of the treasury of its good disposition was always open to receive the precious gems of good doctrines; and it was always ready to acquire knowledge. One night the father perceived that his dear child was turning on the couch of restlessness, and the bird of sleep and tranquility having left the nest of its mind, he was employed in sowing the seeds of grief into the field of his breast, and watering with his tears the herbs of sadness. When the parent saw the signs of his son's melancholy he exclaimed: "Oh apple of my soul's eyes what has happened to thee this night that the string of the binding of thy volume of rest has been torn asunder, and the leaves of they quietness have fallen into disorder, and thy only lesson is the reading of the A B C of lamentation?" The child replied: "Oh dear father, my condition is indeed a sad one; as it is Friday to-morrow, and I am to rehearse with my master the lessons of the whole week, I fear that on account of my negligence I may have forgotten some, and by this I may be

put to shame in the presence of all the other boys and be reproved by our teacher; this is the apprehension which has made me sleepless. When his father heard this, he drew his sleeve over his eyes and awaking from the sleep of carelessness said: "Darling of thy father! The cares for the lessons of one week have made thee restless; but woe to me heedless sinner who have passed several years in following the inspirations of unlawful passions, and have not plucked a single flower from the garden of good actions. I am so intoxicated by the wine of listlessness that I am under no apprehension how to answer for this. I am only embarrassed how I will arrive with all this heavy load of sins at the final judgment."

The affair of the son became a guide to his father, he became penitent and sealed the diploma of his conversion with the signet of the Kazi of a sincere conscience. He spread the carpet of devotion and piety, and passed his time in prayer till he became one of the good and the happy.

The moral of this story is that the accidents and events of this life must not be lightly esteemed, and that each of them tells its tale which ought to serve for our instructions, as Sheikh Sadi of Shiraz truly says.

VERSES.

When a wise man sees the green trees,
In each leaf he perceives the finger of God.

This maxim is also confirmed by the following:—

STORY XIII.

There was a man in Tabriz the orbs of whose vision were deprived of the faculty of seeing, and the stature of his circum-

stances, of the robe of wealth. He was ranking with the class of paupers and going from house to house for the purpose of begging, he was in the habit of chanting the following:—

DISTICH.

Whoever turns his face from the road of justice,
His breast will become a target for the shafts of misfortune.

One day he went about according to his custom and having stopped near a rich man's house, he began to beg, and also recited the above distich; the master of the house refreshed his thirsty lips with the pleasant shower of a gift and said: "It is some time since I hear this verse from you, I adjure you to tell me the cause of it." The blind man said: "Kind and humane Sir, why do you ask me to relate to you an event which is sad and only renews the wounds of my heart; my birth-place is in Syria near Damascus, my father was in the beginning of his career a hawker, and in that business he considered honesty, piety, and justice as the principal stock in trade of the shop of his livelihood; by the blessing of these upright principles his circumstances were improved and day by day the darkness of his poverty was being dispelled by the rays of the lamp of prosperity; his wealth had gradually increased so much, that he exchanged his occupation with that of a dealer in jewels, and having with some other merchants undertaken an expedition to Bahrain, he bought there a great quantity of pearls and returned home. He engaged in that business with several assistants and the star of his good fortune was daily rising till it culminated, and he became one of the wealthiest men of that country. The diver in the sea of destiny extracted the pearl of my father's life from the shell of existence; all his property fell to my lot; and having sat down in the depository of my father's welfare and ease, I spread like him the carpet of the same employment and occupation; the tree of greediness for, and love of, money had struck deep roots in my heart; worldliness had obtained such complete dominion over me that it deprived me once for all of the reins of self-control; in lucrative specula-

tions and mercantile transactions I took dishonesty and fraud into my partnership, and although I endeavoured to cover the reproving eye of conscience with the sleeve of prohibition I was unable to cope with my insatiable greediness; it is also considered very despicable to commence business in the bazaar before sun-rise, I however was in the habit of opening my shop at that time. One day when I had done this, a man of sinister aspect made his appearance, from whose face the disease of the jaundice of poverty had wiped off the bloom of health. He began to praise God, and having drawn from his pocket a precious pearl, said: "Young man! I was once well off and had great possessions and riches, but by a sudden reverse of fortune I was made pennniless in the twinkling of an eye, and all that has remained to me, is this pearl; the destitution of my family and my difficulties have compelled me to offer it for sale in order to ward off further evils, until the breeze of prosperity again begins to blow towards me." I took the pearl from his hand and although it was extremely valuable, and I was astonished at its beauty, purity, and splendor; I was influenced by the cunning of our trade, turned contemptuously towards the man and said: "This pearl is not so precious as you suppose, your poverty however induces me to buy it, say what is the price?" Then I turned away and busied myself about something else, but the desire to possess the pearl had in reality pervaded my whole being, and I was afraid that it might become the prey of somebody else. The man said: "Dear friend! Although you see me now in a state of distress, there was a time when I presented numerous pearls of this kind to my friends; it is not worth the while to make so much ado about the sale of one pearl only, and I myself am perfectly aware what its price is, but as I have come to your shop, I feel ashamed to go round to others; your own skill and knowledge are also perfectly competent to decide this matter; you may offer me whatever you think just and equitable." He then again handed the pearl to me, and how much so ever I might be contending with my greediness to offer him half the price of its true value, my unrighteous nature would never acquiesce. I drew forth twenty

dirhems from my pocket and placed them before him; he unceremoniously took the money and drawing a deep sigh said: "What justice and humanity!" And withdrew from my presence. I was highly pleased and congratulated myself on the advantageous bargain I had made in obtaining a gem for twenty dirhems which would be considered cheap at one thousand. I drew every moment the comb of complacency over the mustachios of my shrewdness, and placed the hand of approbation upon the shoulder of my expertness, and never suspected that the day of retribution would overtake me.

Only two days had elapsed after this transaction, when I again opened my shop at sunrise before any other inhabitant of the bazaar had risen. I began to arrange my shop, when one of the principal citizens of the city passed on horseback; I thrust my head out from the door to see who the cavalier was, when his horse shied, and the rider being precipitated to the ground, suddenly expired. A crowd of attendants that followed, fell upon me, beat me with sticks and tied my hands; the inhabitants of the bazaar who were inimical to me on account of my unbounded greediness for gain, began to congregate around me, they heartily wished that I might fall into some scrape, and as much as I tried to explain, no one paid attention; but many of them said: "The accumulation of wealth by the unworthy and dishonest clearly points to accidents like this." So much of this kind of talk passed that the majority were convinced of my guilt, and affirmed that I had killed that man. The police having tied my hands and neck, carried me before the Ameer of Damascus, who was a rapacious man, and coveted my riches. He considered this a very good opportunity to attain his end; the guards also said that by the corruscation of the Ameer's prosperity, to-day a wonderfully fat piece of game had fallen into their meshes. No time was given me to explain, the Ameer made a sign that I should be decapitated; some of the bystanders however pleaded for mercy, and I was fined one thousand gold Dinars; by the depredation of this misfortune I was mulcted of more than one-half of my property, and although the loins of my patience had been crushed by the burden of

this loss, I again spread out on all sides the net of acquisition, and the sportsman of my mind was roaming about in search of the game of wealth, until one day when I was sitting in my shop two well-dressed women arrived, one of whom had a sucking babe in her arms, and the other a casket, and both of them sat down on the threshold of my door; the woman with the child in her arms drew several gold Ashrefis from her pocket, and handing them to the other said: "Give this money for the articles which you have bought yesterday from Haji Jellal Kazvini, and tell him that I shall send him the balance to-morrow, and that he is soon to procure the jewels which he promised, because the wedding will come off in ten days more; I shall wait for you, return quickly with an answer." When the woman had departed I became anxious for gain, because I had heard the name of wedding mentioned, and had seen the gold Ashrefis; so I addressed the woman in the following strain:—"Lady of the harem of modesty where have you sent your companion?" She said: "The daughter of such and such a well known citizen is to be given in marriage to the son of the vizier of this city, and we, being attached to the household of the young lady, have come to the bazaar, because we were in need of some fine linen and of jewels; the first we have bought yesterday from the said Haji Jellal and have sent him the price to-day; and as he has promised to procure the jewels also, I have sent my companion with a message." When I had heard this news I considered it a good windfall, and poured a considerable sum into the pocket of my imagination. I continued: "Noble and honored lady! I have many and precious jewels, allow me to display them to you, and you may choose those which you consider eligible; there will be no difficulty in agreeing about the price." The woman answered: "The lady to whom the jewels are to be submitted for approbation is very nice in her choice, and difficult to please, these few days we have shown her many jewels; she desires to see only valuable and high-priced gems; besides, we have already bargained with Haji Jellal, and bought jewels from him, he is also very accommodating to our own selves." Hearing this I knocked

at the door of compliance and said: "Nor would I be disposed to forfeit your good will, because by it I would be greatly benefitted in the profitable transaction of business with great people." She said: "We shall see;" while we were thus conversing her companion arrived, and having taken out a string of valuable pearls from her reticule, showed it to her; she cast a glance at me and whispered something to her companion, then she continued to her in a loud voice: "Since you have brought them, let them remain also." Turning to me she said: "Show us your jewels!" I brought a small box which contained my principal stock, opened it, and displayed the most valuable pearls and jewels which I possessed, and mentioned the price of each; I also fixed the price of the pearl I had bought from that man, at two thousand dirhems." The woman said: "How can I tell whether they will approve of these or not?" She sealed the box, took out tablets from her pocket and wrote something which she delivered to her companion and said: "I shall remain here; let the lady of the house make her choice; if you like, you may send also somebody with my friend, in order to learn where the house is." I had a faithful servant whom I sent along with her companion, and the woman herself sat down in my shop. While this was passing, two men in the bazaar fell into a quarrel with each other, and when they had reached my door they drew their swords and inflicted wounds upon each other; a great crowd gathered immediately and the men of the Ameer also came to fetch those that witnessed the affair; they compelled the shopkeepers to follow, and they dragged me also with them; meanwhile the woman remained sitting in my shop with the child in her arms and said to me: "Do not be uneasy about your shop, for I shall take care of it till you return;" I proceeded a few paces when it occurred to my mind that the woman might deceive me; so I said to the butcher whose shop was next to mine: "Take care of this woman!" And as he had no knowledge of my transaction with her, he supposed that I intended to entrust to him the care of the shop only, and said: "All right."

As some time had passed since my servant went with the other woman and the box of jewels, and had not yet returned; and also the other woman was sitting alone in my shop; I was full of anxiety and went with an oppressed heart to the house of the Ameer; I arrived there after all the witnesses had been examined and discharged; I was taken into the presence of the Ameer to give my testimony, but as I was in a very distracted state of mind on account of that woman, I gave my evidence in a way which did not correspond with the other witnesses. The Ameer smiled and said: "This is the same wretch that has before this killed such and such a man;" the people said: "So it is." The Ameer continued: "This is the reason why his evidence is contradictory to that of a thousand other individuals; such a worthless and godless fellow deserves to be well punished." When I was led out of the palace I gave a good round sum to the officials to induce them to take the bail of respectable persons and to dismiss me. When I returned to my shop, I discovered no trace of the woman; my servant alone was sitting in the shop, crying and in distress. I asked him what had become of the bargain and the woman. He inquired what had become of the woman that had been sitting here. I said that I had committed her to the attention of the butcher; and asked him where he had been and what he had done with the jewel-box? He answered: "You have delivered the box to the woman and communicated to her what to do; you ordered me only to follow her so as to learn where the house is, and this I did; I went with her from the bazaar and passed through several streets until we reached a street called the street of the forty virgins, she stopped near the door of a house, before which a number of respectable men were sitting, and told me to sit down till she came out again. The woman went in, and I remained waiting for her nearly till noon but she never made her appearance; when it was mid-day I heard the voice of the Muezzin* and people began to enter the place in crowds, I supposed that somebody had died in the house

* The crier who calls the people to prayers from the top of the Mosque.

and that this multitude was going to condole and to inquire; after a short time they all came out again. I was greatly tired from straining my attention for so long a time, and asked one of the people: "Does the woman who went in here not care to come out at all?" The man laughed outright and said: "Whose house do you suppose this is? And what woman are you asking about? Step forward, there is nobody to prohibit you, and see what place this house is." I arose from my seat and entered the portico with fear and apprehension, and proceeded till I reached the interior of a mosque were I saw the people engaged in prayers; on the opposite side of the mosque I also discovered an open door, by which also people were coming and going; then I knew that the woman must have passed through it; I also went out by that door and perceived women like her walking about, but as she had no sign on her dress by which I might have recognized her, and not knowing her name to call her by, I wandered about the street for a while, and then hopelessly returned to the shop." When I heard from my servant this melancholy news I was choked with grief and almost lost my senses; I went to the butcher and asked him what had become of the woman that I had recommended to his attention? He answered: "Where have you entrusted a woman to me? You have only told me to take care of your shop; when you were gone I noticed a woman sitting there with a child in her arms; I asked her with whom she had any business? To which she replied: "I want a sum of money from the jeweller;" after a moment she brought her child and said: 'Let this child remain here till I come back;' she left the child and went away, and there it is in the shop." I said: "Bring it out that I may see it." The butcher did so, but when I raised the veil from its face, we discovered that it was a plaster figure enveloped and dressed up like an infant; I said to the butcher: "This is a very strange child;" He replied: "Leave off joking, go and inquire for the woman." I again continued: "I entrusted the woman to your care and I want you to produce her, she remained in my shop as a pledge for more

than three thousand Tomans* of jewels. He replied: "You fool! Perhaps I was your servant that I should take care of the woman instead of you doing it yourself." I was in so great a state of excitement that I took up his great butcher's knife which was lying near me, and threw it at him; it struck him and sliced off a part of his face; upon this his friends and neighbours tied me and carried me before the Ameer, who ordered them to kill me; but there were many who said: "This man is crazy and beside himself, of what use could it be to kill him; whatever he possesses ought to be confiscated and then he ought to be expelled the city, that this may be an example to others." Every thing which I possessed was taken from my house as a mulct for my crime, and being driven out of Damascus I went away poor and naked; when I reached the desert I lost my road and wandered about thirsty and hungry for ten days and lamented over my misfortunes; suddenly a man met me and mounted me on his camel; having carried me as far as the main-road, he asked me whether I knew him? I said: "Your voice seems to be that of a friend." He continued: "I am the same man who sold you that pearl for twenty dirhems to try your honesty, and I have it with me now;" accordingly he put his hand into his bag, drew forth the same pearl, and showed it to me saying: "Know that I am King Akabil and that several thousands of genii are subject to me and my occupation is to go about in the cities and bazaars under various disguises to discover whether people are honest and upright in their dealings or not; when I find anybody to be honest I always remain his friend and helper, but when I see a man who is unjust and fraudulent, I endanger his life and property; you ought to know that the worst of actions are unrighteousness and deceit towards one's fellow-beings; on account of your deceitfulness and injustice the granary of your immense property has in a very short time been blown away by the wind of non-existence." I commenced to cry and complain but he said: "Remorse is too late now;" and disappeared from my sight; so

* One Toman is of the value of about ten shillings English money.

I came to this country and am wandering about in a state of helplessness and destitution in bitter repentance and grief for my former dishonesty and for the loss of my property; whatever I undertook, nothing succeeded till at last my eyes became blind, and now, begging has become my trade; and the reason why I always chant the same distich is; that neither the high nor the low should abandon the road of honesty and justice, lest they be exiled like myself, from the abode of peace and prosperity."

It is certain that whosoever sows the seeds of fraud and dishonesty in the field of his imagination will never reap the harvest of prosperity; but he will like the Kazi of Ghaznin obtain the signature of disgrace to his diploma of respectability, and will depart from the tribunal of this life to the ruinous abode of annihilation.

STORY XIV.

During the reign of Sultan Mahomed Subaktaghin in Ghaznin, a man was travelling from Aderbaijan to Hindustan; when he arrived in Ghaznin, he was much pleased with the climate, so he concluded to settle there; and as he had great experience in commerce, he went to the bazaar and became a broker and was very successful in business; he intended to marry, and fortune being propitious to him, he entered into a matrimonial alliance with a virtuous and handsome young woman; by degrees his business also became more and more flourishing and having accumulated much wealth, he was numbered among the richest merchants. He wished to extend his transactions to Hindustan and sent goods to that country; but as he had no connexions or intimate friends in Ghaznin who might take charge of his wife till his return, this thought troubled him greatly; and as he considered it the first duty of a respectable

man to be on his guard on this subject, and not to hazard his reputation and honor; he determined not to start on his journey till he had provided an asylum for his spouse. As the Kazi of the city was a man noted for his piety, virtue and honor, he said to himself: "I cannot do better than entrust the keeping of my wife to so godly and honest a man who is a magistrate and a churchman, and enjoys the esteem of the rich and the poor; let her remain in his house till I return from my journey." He hastened to make his obeisance to the Kazi and said: "Oh President of the judgment seat of truth and piety; by whose talented and searching disposition the explanations of religious and secular questions are flowing, and by whose essentially holy authority and intelligence the commendatory and prohibitory laws are corroborated, may your righteous opinion always remain the guide of those who seek to walk on the straight way of piety. I, your humble servant, am an inhabitant of this city, and it is my intention to undertake a journey to Hindustan; I have a young wife, the leaves of whose modesty and virtue are bound up in the splendid volume of her natural excellence; but as I have nobody who might protect and take care of her, and also because she might fall under the obloquy of false tongues; I flatter myself that she might find a refuge under the guardianship of your Lordship." The Kazi placed the seal of acquiescence upon this request and said that he would take care of her. That man furnished his wife with all the necessary expenses for one year, delivered her to the Kazi, and started on his journey. The lady spent her whole time in the house of the Kazi in prayer and devotion, and nearly a whole year had elapsed, without the breeze of a single profane glance having blown on the vernal abode of her face, and without her having ever heard the bird of a voice in the foliage of her ears; till one day the Kazi unexpectedly made his appearance and looked at her, when he perceived her Leila-like beauty sitting within the black mansion of her musked ringlets, and her sweet tenderness mounted upon the Gulgún* of attractive-

* Gulgún is the name of the horse which Lady Shirin rides, in the poem of Ferhad and Shirin.

ness and melancholy, the Majnún* of the Kazi's intellect became troubled, and Ferhad like† he began to dig the Bestún of his soul, which was melting and burning in the censer of distraction. He was anxious to make overturns against her virtue, but being aware of her whole nature and chastity, he durst not attempt it; nevertheless when the wife of the Kazi one day absented herself to visit the public baths and had left the lady alone to take care of the house, he was so completely dominated by his unlawful passion that he threw skyward the turban of concupiscence and said:

VERSES.

The desired game for which I looked in the skies,
Has now on earth fallen into the net of my good fortune.

The Kazi locked the door and commenced his stratagem by complimenting her modesty and continued to address her in the following strain: "Virtuous lady! The reputation of my honesty and piety has spread in the world and penetrated all corners, neither could the charms of the paradisiacal Houris seduce my righteous disposition from the road of firm determination, or impel me to transgress the laws of purity; then why do you avoid me so much? If the absence of intelligence and of the knowledge of the true state of things keep your face veiled with the curtain of bashfulness; my obedience to the laws of God and my fear of eternal punishment at the day of resurrection, prohibits me from allowing the fire of sensuality to be kindled within me.

VERSE.

I would not disturb your peace even with the sinful glance of my eye.

Be of good cheer and throw aside the veil of apprehension from your face, because there is no danger of sinning; and

* Majnún and Leila are the Romeo and Juliet of the East.

† Ferhad dug in the mountain Bistún and sculptured Shirin's likeness.

although it is against the law of God and the prophet to exact services from guests, but since you belong to the house and I am dependent of your kindness, I would request you to procure me some food, for I am hungry." The woman placed the prohibitory veil of bashfulness on her face, and waited upon the Kazi with all due modesty, she put the meal before him and retired to a corner; the Kazi had provided himself with a drug which deprives of his senses any one who tastes it, and said to the woman: "You know that three kinds of persons will be rejected from the mercy of God on the day of resurrection, and will be subjected to endless tortures; firstly he, who eats alone, secondly he who sleeps alone, and thirdly he who travels alone; and till now it has never happened to me that I did any of these three things; since I am now eating alone and any one who does this, has the devil for his companion, and to whomsoever this happens, his faith will be endangered; why should you not, in order to free me from the snares of the devil, defile your hands by partaking of this meal?" He did not cease to invite her till she sat down near the table and helped herself to some food, the Kazi took this opportunity to throw some of the medicine into the plate; after the unfortunate woman had swallowed a few morsels she felt herself fainting, and wanting to get up from the table, her feet refused to bear her, and she fell senseless to the ground; the Kazi quickly gathered up the articles that were on the table and meditated worse things; when he suddenly heard noises on the outside; this greatly disturbed him, and he was much embarrassed where to conceal the woman so that nobody might discover the circumstance. The Kazi happened to keep his money and valuables in a subterraneous room which was situated exactly under the apartment in which he was, nobody knew anything about this place except himself; he opened the trap-door, thrust the woman into it and again covered the floor with the carpet; then he went out and saw that his family had returned from the bath. The Kazi said: "Why did you all leave the house empty?" They answered: "We have left the wife of the merchant to take care of the place." The Kazi said: "It is two hours since I arrived at

home and have seen no one; why do you trust such a person, she may have taken away something." They were all astonished and said that she was not such a woman, and wondered what had become of her. While this talk was going on, the husband of that woman having just returned from his journey to Hindustan, came at that moment to the house of the Kazi to inquire for his wife. The Kazi said: "It is some time since your wife has left the house without giving us notice or asking permission." The merchant said: "Oh Kazi! This is not the time to crack jokes, deliver to me my wife." The Kazi swore an oath and affirmed that he was in earnest. The Merchant said: "I am too well acquainted with the nature and disposition of my wife, ever to believe her to be capable of such a trick; there must be something else the matter." The Kazi got angry and replied: "It is I who must be offended you foolish man; why do you talk nonsense and uselessly insult us? Go and see where your wife is!"—As the merchant was greatly attached to his spouse and the smoke of distress was beginning to ascend from the oven of his brains, he tore the collar of patience and hastened to make his complaint to the Sultan, and prostrating himself upon the carpet of supplication he said:

VERSES.

Oh exalted and happy monarch,
May felicity be the servant of your palace.
The Kazi of the city has done me injustice,
Greater than the blast of a tornado of the west.
If it be permitted I shall explain
The injustice of that mean spirited wretch.

The Sultan said: "Bring forward your complaint, that I may become acquainted with it." The merchant said: "I am a native of Aderbaijan and the fame of the justice and protection which the poor obtain at the hands of Your Majesty, have induced me to settle in this country, and it is some time since I dwell under the shadow of Your Majesty's protection. I had a beautiful and modest wife, and intending

to travel to Hindustan, I committed her, one year ago to the charge of the Kazi. Now I have again returned, but he, being deceived by his covetousness refuses to give up to me my wife." The Sultan ordered the Kazi to be brought into his presence, but the latter, suspecting what would happen, suborned by the promise of money several vagabonds to testify, when called upon, that they had seen the merchant's wife absent herself from the Kazi's house, three months ago. When the Kazi arrived, the Sultan asked him what kind of a complaint the merchant had against him. The Kazi said: "May the torch of Your Majesty's welfare be luminous, and the castle of opposition ruinous! This man has entrusted his wife to me and it is nearly three months, since she went out of it without giving any notice, and up to this time she has not come back, we have been unable to discover any traces of her." The merchant answered; "This is contrary to the nature of my wife, and I do not believe it." The Sultan said: "Who are the witnesses." The Kazi answered that several neighbours and householders of the vicinity were acquainted with the fact, and wrote down their names; at a sign of the Sultan to a Chamberlain these witnesses were brought in, and they confirmed the assertion of the Kazi. Then the Sultan said to the merchant: "As the Kazi has established his assertion by witnesses, your complaint falls to the ground." Upon this the merchant retired disappointed. The Sultan was in the habit of perambulating the bazaars and streets of the city occasionally, in disguise, to mix among the people, and thus to discover what they thought of him. That might he left his palace according to his wont and walked about; he happened to pass near the door of a shop where boys were playing at the game of: the king and his vizier. One of the children was made king, and said to the others: "I am king and you are all under my authority, you must not seek to evade my commands." Another boy said: "If you give unjust judgments like Sultan Mahomed we shall soon depose you." The other asked: "What injustice has Sultan Mahmood done?" He answered: "To-day the affair of a merchant came before the Sultan, this merchant had confided his wife to the keeping

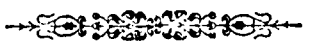
of the Kazi, and he hid her in his own house; the Sultan called for witnesses when the Kazi gained his cause by bringing into court witness whom he had previously bribed. It is a great pity that people should have the administration of justice in their hands who are unable to distinguish between right and wrong; had I been in the place of the Sultan I would very quickly have discovered the truth or falsehood of the witnesses of the Kazi." When the Sultan had heard the conversation of these children he sighed and returned to his palace in great agitation of mind; next morning as soon as it was day-light he sent somebody to fetch the boy. The boy came and the Sultan received him in a very friendly way saying: "This day you shall be my Lieutenant the whole day from morning till evening, and I intend to allow you to sit in judgment and to act entirely according to your own will." Then the Sultan whispered to a Chamberlain to invite the merchant again to state his complaint against the Kazi, the merchant came and did so; the witnesses were again called for, whom the Kazi again brought into court. The Kazi wished to take a seat, but the boy said: "Ho Master Kazi! It is a long time since the leading strings of judicial power, and the power of tying and untying the knotty points of law have been in your hands; why do you seem to be so ignorant of legal customs? You have been brought into this court as a party in a law suit and not as an assessor; it is the rule that you should stand below on an equality with your accuser, till the court breaks up, and then you should obey whatever its decision might be." The Kazi went and placed himself near the merchant; then the merchant proffered his complaint, and the Kazi again affirmed that the woman had abandoned the house three months ago. The boy said: "Have you any witnesses? The Kazi beckoned to his followers and said: These are the witnesses." The boy called one of the witnesses and asked him in a subdued voice whether he had seen the woman? He said: "Yes." Then he inquired further what signs there were on her person, stature, or face? The man became embarrassed and said: "She had a mole on her forehead, one of her teeth is wanting, she is of a fresh conplexion, tall and slender."

The boy asked: "What time of day was it when she went away from the house of the Kazi?" He answered: "Morning." The boy said: "Remain in this place." Then he called for another witness of whom he also asked the description, and got the following answer: "She is of low stature, lean, her cheeks are white and red, she has a mole near the lips, and she left the house in the afternoon." Having placed this individual in another corner, he called for a third witness whose evidence contradicted both the others; and gradually he examined all of them, and found them disagreeing in everything. The Sultan was sitting by the side of the boy and had heard all; when the hearing of the witnesses was completed, the boy said: "You God-forgetting wretches why do you give false evidence? Let the instruments of torture be brought forward, that we may find out the truth." As soon as they heard the name of torture mentioned, they all offered to say the truth and acknowledged themselves to be a set of poor fellows whom the Kazi had bribed with a sum of money and had instructed what to say; they also confessed that they knew nothing whatever about the woman. The boy called the Kazi, and asked him what he had to say in this business; the Kazi commenced to tremble all over his body, and said: "The truth is as I have stated it." The boy said: "Our Kazi is a bold man, and his haughtiness hinders him from acknowledging the truth, the instruments of punishment ought to be made use of." When the Kazi heard this, the fear of torture greatly distressed him, and he confessed the truth; upon this the boy kissed tha floor of good manners with the lips of obedience and said: "The remainder of this affair is to be settled by the Sultan." The Sultan was much pleased with the acuteness and intelligence of the boy, and ordered the Kazi to be beheaded and all his property to be given to the wife of that merchant. The boy was treated kindly aud educated, until by degrees he won the whole confidence of the Sultan and became one of his greater favourites.

The conclusion which we draw from this story is: that if the Kazi had acted like those that walk on the straight forward road of honesty and law, and if he had not deviated from the

path of truth and become a prey to the teeth of his cupiscence for the beauty of that woman; the ship of his life and property would not have been wrecked in the whirlpool of his sensuality, and his life would not have been swallowed by the whale of annihilation. He is a high-minded man the first principle of whose existence is truth, and who considers it as the key to the store-house of prosperity in both worlds.

How stratagem will sometimes effect what main force cannot accomplish, will be seen from the following :—



STORY XV.

A man of the name of Shams with two other inhabitants of Nishapoor intended to go on a pilgrimage to Mecca, and started on it with a Caravan; after they had progressed for several days, they reached the desert; one evening after the sun had covered himself with the mantle of concealment, and the night had begun to display her musked ringlets; these three men, who had never travelled before and were altogether unacquainted with the customs of Caravans, felt tired and sleepless, they lost the reins of endurance from their hands and lagged behind, and thought that after a while they would again be able to join; they consulted with each other and concluded to repose for a short time to recover their strength, and that they would overtake the Caravan afterwards. They went to sleep, but were so intoxicated by the goblet of unconsciousness that they did not awake before the night had passed, and the sailor of destiny had again propelled the golden boat of the sun into the midst of the azure ocean of the firmament. When they awoke they

threw their arrows of vision in all directions, and sent the couriers of their glances to the right and left, but were unable to discover any trace of the Caravan; they arose under great apprehensions, and hastened forward; but although they did their utmost, they again retraced their steps to the same place, in spite of themselves, like a boat in an eddy. They despaired of joining the Caravan and being in deadly fear, did not know with what plaster the dreadful wound which they had inflicted upon themselves by their carelessness might be healed, and by means of what remedy they might come out from the well of their misfortune. They continued to roam through the ups and downs of the desert till the afternoon of next day, although they were hungry and thirsty; at last they perceived on the horizon something moving, which put them into still greater fright; this happened to be an Arab, one of the robbers of the desert who was sufficiently alert to jump from the lasso of swiftness to the top of the firmament and to rob the sun and moon of their splendour, and by the twinkling of his eye to separate the meanings from words; in valour and strength he accounted Rustum* as an old woman compared with himself. It was some time, since he had stuck to the desert like the disease of the cancer, and had made it his employment to deprive of life and property whom he could. As soon as he had reached the three lost wanderers he tied them to his horse and dragged them forcibly after himself, till he arrived near a spring of water, there he drew forth his sword and killed two of the men; having done this, he placed it on the ground and searched for gold or silver, when Shams, who was yet alive, saw him thus engaged, he suddenly burst his bonds, snatched up the sword, and pierced with it one side of the robber, so that it came out on the other, and the owl of his accursed soul flew to the ruinous habitation of non-existence. When Shams had thrown the thorn of the existence of that ill-fated and miserable wretch, out of the way of the bare-footed travellers of that road, he thanked God, took away from the corpse the money of his companions,

* Rustum is the name of a warrior who had the strength of eighty elephants, he is chiefly known from the Shahnamah.

and mounted the horse of the robber; but as he knew not in what direction to proceed, he considered, that as the horse was in the habit of travelling much in these parts, it must needs be able to find inhabited places, so he abandoned the reins to it, and the steed ran with the velocity of lightning till it attained an encampment, the black tents of which were scattered on the surface of the desert like the moles on the cheeks of Leila. This was the place where the murdered robber used to dwell, and from which he used to sally forth; one week had elapsed since he had left the place, and all the inhabitants were astonished at his late return, they all came out to meet him, but they soon discovered that it was another man, mounted on his horse; they took the bridle of it, surrounded him, led him into the camp, and the little and the great commenced to attack him. Shams knew that the robber must be an inhabitant of the camp, and that these were his relatives. The color of the flower of his life having been blown away from his cheek, by the autumnal blast of the tempest of this accident, he considered with himself, that he had escaped from the claws of the wolf of one misfortune, but that destiny had again stretched the bow-string of an unfortunate coincidence, and that the breeze of fate had caused a strange flower to bloom, which required a strong arm, so that it would be almost impossible to be saved from this misfortune. He turned this over in his mind and considering that every thing depended from prudent management, he thought that to gain time was the first step, so he said to that crowd: "The rose-bush of my life is so withered from travelling on the road of accidents and exhaustion that the breeze of no power could move it; if you have any food, bring some of it to me, that I may strengthen myself and relate the story of that young man." They brought him victuals, which he eat, and having arranged the arrow of stratagem in the bow of his mind, he spoke: "Know ye inhabitants of these tents, that I belong to the Caravan of the pilgrims, which had stopped at such and such a halting place, when all of a sudden the Rustum-like warrior made his appearance on the verge of the desert." If the fulguration of

his thunderlike scimitar had swept over the firmament, it would have cut it in twain; and if the whistling noise of his sword coming down with force in battle had reached the ear of the mountain Kaf* it would have taken refuge under the wings of Unka.† He attacked the Caravan, killed some and wounded others, he was like an eagle falling on a flock of pigeons, or like a spark of fire in a ripe field which grows into a conflagration and burns every thing. As the Caravan consisted of ten or twelve thousand men, some of them attacked him, but after having killed a number of them, he was made prisoner; they intended to extinguished the lamp of his life with the tempest of enmity; when the leader of the Caravan and some influential men saw this, they thought it would be a pity to sever the tree of life of so valliant a youth with the saw of annihilation. They said: "We shall save your life if you pay the price of blood of those whom you have exterminated, and if you swear never in future to commit such a crime;" and they absolved him for ten thousand dinars. He said: "I would give you even more than this sum, but I have not even a hundred dirhems with me; with reference to this I would mention that my friends and family live in a camp in this vicinity, and there I possess much money and property. If you would order anybody to mount my horse, to ride to the encampment, and to explain the circumstance, it is possible that he would obtain a quantity of gold and silver, surpassing the stipulated sum." Everybody in his turn was invited to undertake this task, but all refused, and when the heirs of the killed men saw that they were disappointed in their expectation of blood-ransom, they were ready to murder him. I was sorry that the granary of life of so brave a man should be trodden out by the foot of destruction; so I rose and said: "It is a good tree which bears only the fruits of expectation of good deeds; I will undertake to carry the message but I know neither the road nor the people." He answered: "My horse knows the way and it will

* The mountain Kaf is believed to surround the whole earth.

† The Unka is a fabulous bird which is similar to the Griffin and also to the Phœnix, and Homâi.

carry you to the place, inform my friends to send ten thousand dinars and not to grudge them, for they are the ransom of my life, and such a case is the opportunity to show their love to me." When Shams had come thus far in his oration the friends of the robber looked at each other in astonishment and said: "What impossible things do you relate to us? That young man is tried and experienced in the arts of horsemanship and valour, he does not engage in a conflict before he is convinced that he will come out of it again unscathed, and it is extremely improbable that such an accident as you mentioned, should have happened to him; however as this is his own charger there may be some truth in what you assert." Shams said: "What I narrated to you is in conformity with common sense; do you think that I who am weak, and can in no wise cope with his strength and valour, would have been able to deprive him of his horse? This is not the time for squabbling, you ought to make haste to show him your friendship in delivering him from the vengeance of the heirs of the murdered men; I have obtained two days respite, and if I do not return within that time, he will certainly be killed, and then your repentance will come to late. I apprehend you will fare like those policemen who lost the coveted booty from their grasp, and that you will gain nothing by scratching the breast of repentance and sorrow." The inhabitants of the camp asked: "How was this?" Shams said:

STORY XVI.

"On a certain night a thief, who was able to steal the five senses from the body, and himself possessed the senses of all bodies, betook himself to the house of a rich man, and collected many valuables. When he wished to go away again,

and had reached the door of the house, he met a number of watchmen and police; he considered with himself with the snare of what stratagem he was to entangle the feet of the approach of the guards; he perceived a broom and commenced to sweep; the watchmen arrived and asked what occasion there was to sweep the house at mid-night? The thief said: "The master of the house has died last evening, and the passage is dirty, and as there will be plenty of other work to do in the morning, I make now use of the opportunity." The watchmen said: "How is it that we do not hear the voice of lamentation?" The robber answered: "To-morrow morning you will hear the sounds of distress." The watchmen went their way, and the thief took the articles which he had stolen. When it became morning the landlord began to lament in consequence of this robbery, when the police heard it, they knew that the man was a thief and had swept the house by way of stratagem; they searched everywhere, but reaped only the fruits of repentance. I have adduced this simile, to show, that when the leading-string of an affair falls into our hands we must not esteem it lightly, and that it is of no use whatever to gnaw the finger of indecision; the duties of friendship which you bear to that man, require that you should now despatch several individuals with gifts, and send them to accompany me. They agreed to this proposal and selected ten men, each of whom carried one thousand dinars and other presents. Those individuals well knew the Caravan track and followed it from stage to stage until at last they overtook it in a halting place. Shams said: "Remain for a while till I go forward and explain my errand." He advanced and informed the Leader of the Caravan of his adventure and of the death of his two companions; of the friends of the robber, and also of the ruse by which he had saved himself from them. The Leader of the Caravan praised him and greatly approved of his cunning. The companions of the robber were called and their presents accepted, then the Leader of the Caravan explained to them the true state of affairs, they expected to be punished, and he ordered them to be executed on the spot; but as many people interceded and said,

that as the guilty man had fallen into the well of his own crime, and they were not as blameable as himself, they had not forfeited their lives; accordingly they were warned not to infest the road or to attack travellers, they also pledged themselves to abstain in future; so they were dismissed.

A person who presumes too much upon his own shrewdness often knocks the helmet of self-importance on his head, as will appear from the following:—

STORY XVII.

A deaf man had a friend the garden of whose health became withered by the autumnal breeze of sickness, and by it he was laid prostrate on the bed of infirmity. The deaf man went on a visit of condolence to him; on the road he said to himself: "When I meet the sick man I shall ask him how he is?" He will certainly reply: "I feel a little better," then I shall say: "God be praised!" After that I will inquire who his physician is? Then he will give me the name of the doctor. Then I shall say: "He is very skillful and will soon deliver you from your disease. After that I shall ask what his medicine and his food is? He will mention them both, then I shall continue: "Both of them are very appropriate for your distemper;" after that I shall recite the Fateha* and depart again. He exercised himself in these questions and answers till he reached the sick man's house. The latter happened to

* This is the 1st Chapter of the Qorán, or chapter of praise which it is usual to recite on such occasions; and also when important business is commenced or contemplated

labour at that moment under great nausea and depression of spirits. The visitor said: "My dear Sir how do you feel?" The sick man replied in a tone of dissatisfaction: "Do not ask me, I am nearly ready to give up the ghost." The deaf man smiled and said: "God be praised! My prayer has been heard." After that he said: "Who is your physician dear Sir?" The sick man said: "The angel of death. The deaf man seemed to be a little puzzled but answered: "This is very well; I also had him in view because he is so skilful, and cures every patient he treats." Then he asked what his food and medicine were? The sick man replied: "Pain and distress." The visitor continued: "May they redound to your welfare, both of them are very appropriate for your disease." After that he began the Fateha; the sick man said: "May God forgive you." Then the visitor took his leave.

Sometimes it happens, that in the solution of a difficulty a plan is matured by an ignorant person, which had escaped the intelligence of wise men; and for this reason the polishers of the speculum of morals and counsels have compared the overcoming of obstacles and devising of means, with a ring that had been lost in the desert; to find it many people go and seek, and sometimes a heedless little boy discovers it. In this way the nails of advice of a lunatic have untied the knots of grief from the heart of Zain ul Arab.

STORY XVIII.

There was in Damascus a man of the name of Zain ul Arab with the honey of whose life the poison of hardships was always

mixed; day and night he hastened like the breeze from North to South in the world of exertion, and he was burning brightly like straw, from his endeavours, in the oven of acquisition, in order to gain a loaf of bread and to feed his family. In course of time however he succeeded in accumulating a considerable sum of money, but as he had tasted the bitterness and poison of destitution, and had for a very long time carried the heavy load of poverty upon his back; and fearing to lose his property by the chameleon like changes of fortune, he took up his money on a certain night, carried it out of the city and buried it under a tree. After some time had passed he began sorely to miss the presence of his treasure, and betook himself to the tree to refresh his eyes with the sight of it. But when he dug up the foot of the tree, he discovered that his soul-exhilarating deposit was refreshing the palate of some one else. The morning of his prosperity was suddenly changed into the evening of bitterness and disappointment. He was embarrassed to what friend to confide his secret, and to what remedy to fly, for the recovery of his treasure. The lancet of grief had pierced the liver of his peace; and the huntsman of distress had tied up the wings and feet of the bird of his serenity. One day he went on some business to a learned and wise man of the city with whom he was on a footing of intimacy, this man said to him: "It is some time since I perceive the glade of your circumstances to have been destroyed by the burning coals of restlessness, and a sad change to have taken place in your health, I do not see the reason, nor do I know the thorn of what misfortune has pierced the foot of your heart, of the dawn of what hardship has risen from the East of your mind." Zain ul Arab wept tears of sadness and said: "Oh thou standard coin from the mint of love, the treachery of fortune has brought a strange accident upon me, and the bow of destiny has let fly an unpropitious arrow upon my feeble target. I have a heavy heart and great sorrow, were I to reveal it to you perhaps it would be of no use, and would plunge you into grief also." The learned man said: "Since the hearts of intimate friends are like looking-glasses and are receiving the figures of mutual secrets, it is at all times

necessary that they should communicate to each other any difficulties, which they might fall into, that they may solve them by taking in common those steps which prudence and foresight forestall for their removal." Zain ul Arab said: "Dear friend! I had some gold, and fearing that it might be stolen, I carried it to such and such a place and buried it under a tree, and when I again visited the place I perceived the garment of my beloved Joseph to be sprinkled with the blood of ths wolf of deception." The learned man said: "This is a grave accident, and it will be difficult to get at the track of your gold; perhaps some one has seen you when you buried it; he who has taken it will have to give an account of it in the next world, for God is omniscient. Give me ten days delay that I may study the book of expedients and stratagems, perhaps something will occur to me." That knowing man sat down for ten days in the school of meditation, and how much so ever he turned over the leaves of the volume of his mind from the preface to the epilogue, he could hit upon no plan. On the tenth day they again met in the street, and he said to Zain ul Arab: "Although the diver of my mind had plunged deeply and searched diligently in this deep sea, he was unable to take hold of the precious pearl of a wise plan of operation; may God recompense you from the stores of his hidden treasury." They were conversing in this way, when a lunatic met them and said: "Well my boys what secret mongering have you got together?" The learned man said to Zain ul Arab: "Come let us relate our case to this crazy fellow, to see the flower of what plan will bloom from his mind." Zain ul Arab said: "Dear friend! You with all your knowledge could not devise anything during ten days, what information could we gain from a poor lunatic who does not know whether it is day now or night?" The learned man answered: "There is no telling what he might say to us, you know however that the most foolish as well as the most wise have ideas, and a sentence uttered perhaps at random, often furnishes a clue by which the desired object may be attained." Meanwhile also a little boy arrived, and perceiving the lunatic, stopped to see his tricks.

The two friends explained their case to the lunatic. The crazy man seemed to be immersed in thought for a time, then he said: "He who took the root of that tree for a medicine, also took the gold;" saying this he turned his back upon them and went his way. They consulted with each other what indication this remark might furnish; when the little boy who had also over-heard the conversation, asked what kind of a tree it is? Zain ul Arab replied that it is a Jujube tree. The boy said: "This is easy; you ought to inquire from all the doctors of this town for whom a medicine has been prescribed of the roots of this tree?" They greatly approved of the boy's acuteness and also of the lunatic's lucky thought. The learned man was very well acquainted with all the physicians of the city and made his inquiries, till he met one of them who informed him that about twenty days ago he had prescribed for a merchant of the name of Khojah Semender, who suffered from asthma, and that one of the remedies was the root of that Jujube tree; the learned man quickly discovered the merchant's house, found him enjoying perfect health, and said to him: "Ah Khojah all the goods of this world ought to be given up to purchase health; by the blessing of God you have recovered your health, and you ought to give up what you found near the foot of that tree, because the proprietor of it is a worthy person and possesses nothing besides that." The honest merchant answered: "It is true, I have found it, and it is with me, if you will describe it I shall deliver it into your hands;" this circumstance was ascertained from Zain ul Arab who named the exact sum, and so obtained his lost money.

Who does not keep his promise, will fare like Hamed of Bosrah:—

STORY XIX.

Sultan Mahmood the Gaznavide was in the habit of going during the night through the streets in disguise, and if he discovered that the shafts of tyranny had wounded any poor man, he was always ready to apply the healing balm of his authority. One night he was wandering about according to his custom, and happened to pass near a ruined building in which two unhappy men, the feet of whose well-being had seen fettered by the chains of misery in consequence of the unfriendly reverses of their destiny, had taken up their dwelling place like two owls, and related to each other their misfortunes and prayed to God for their deliverance. One of these two men whose name was Hamed, drew a deep sigh and said: "Brother in distress! The favour of God is not withdrawn from any one of his creatures, and each misfortune which disturbs their peace, befalls them only in consequence of their own obstinate and envious disposition; my own history is a corroboration of this, and by breaking the promise which I had made to an unfortunate individual, I have brought upon my head the fire of distress, and lost my prosperity and peace of mind." His companion said: "Relate to me your story that I may profit by it." Hamed said: "I was one of the richest merchants of Bosrah, I had the leading strings to boundless wealth and property in my hands. I conceived the idea of travelling to Hindustan and started with considerable property. I was obliged to embark on board a ship to continue my voyage, and one day a great storm arose, which nearly upset the boat of my life; then I turned to God who is the guide of every one to the road of final salvation; and as there was a person in the ship, who had been suffering from, and was broken down, by the reverses of fortune, with whom I had made friends; I made a vow in my mind that if I should be so happy as to save my neck and pro-

perty from the lasso of this great distress, I shall give one tenth of my property to that unhappy young man, to enable him again to start in life. By the grace of God it so happened that I was saved with all my goods, and not a hair of my head was lost; we placed our feet safe and sound from the blackness of that sea, upon the white sands of the shore. After I had landed I calculated to what one tenth of all my merchandize would amount to, and finding it to be a high sum, my covetousness whispered to me that in journeys of this kind people encounter many dangers, and if I made such a promise at each of them, very likely the riches of the whole world would be insufficient to make it good, and at the end of my journey not a farthing would remain in my pocket. I have numberless poor relatives and friends, if I can spare money, why should I not give it to them. I must extinguish the lamp of this promise with the wind of forgetfulness, as I have told it to nobody, nobody can blame me for breaking it. After some time we arrived in Kashmir, and as that melancholy young man had experienced no favour nor help from my hard-heartedness, he separated himself from me, and roamed about the town. I established myself in an agreeable place, the climate and pleasantness of the country delighted me so much that I concluded to remain and to trade; I was successful in all my transactions, and turned away my face from the poor fellow who was suffering all sorts of misfortunes, and I wholly obliterated in my mind the vow I had made; until one night, when I was sitting in my room a mendicant stopped near my door and said: "Master of this house! You are reposing in the cradle of prosperity and you know nothing of those who are sitting in the prison of poverty. If you desire to obtain the reward of God, you must not allow the spirit of your carelessness to overcome you; and you must deal honestly to make profit in the bazaar of God, that all your undertakings may be successful and safe from reverses within the bulwarks of his protection." When I went outside I was unable to discover the speaker; the following night I again heard the same voice, and also the third night, but I could not see the person who was thus admonishing me. The third day when I went

to the bazaar I saw the poor youth who had been my travelling companion, erring about in the bazaar in a state of great destitution. He saluted me respectfully and began to detail his distressed condition, but I cast a threatening glance at him and employed myself with other people. When he, who had become melted by the fire of poverty, perceived that the padlock of his hopes would never be opened by the key of my hardheartness, he looked upon me woefully and said:

VERSES.

Friend! If you are so unjust towards me,
God will open the door of his grace to me.

Saying this he disappeared from my view. Some time after this I was one day sitting in the shop of contentment, surrounded by comforts; my eyes met nothing but precious gems, pearls, gold and nice things. I was highly pleased and elated that I possessed all these riches, and was just plunging into the contemplation of my happiness, when an old man habited like a durvaish and a saint, made his appearance, and sat down on the threshold of my shop; in one hand he had a rosary and in the other a staff, in his turban was stuck a toothpick and under his arm he carried a book; he had a clock on his back, he was murmuring something between his teeth and breathed it out in all directions. I said to myself: this is certainly one of the people of God, and congratulated myself on his approach, saying: "Blessed old man! Your coming to me portends joy and is a good omen."

VERSES.

Thou art welcome, for, the assembly of my eye has become illuminated,
By the blessing of the world-exhilarating sun of thy arrival.

He said: "I require an interview of intimacy with you, and it is necessary that we should be alone;" I took him inside, and when his eye alighted on the splendour of my goods he exclaimed:

VERSES.

Man has no greater enemy than wealth,
It is on account of its kernal that the almond is broken at last.

Then he said: "Beloved friend! Know that I stand in connexion with the Genii and if any misfortunes are to happen they give me notice; I in my turn again apprize the people of God to forestall them by their circumspection. - I have been informed that the Chief of the police of this town has gnashed his teeth of covetousness to confiscate your riches and property and is firmly bent to carry out his purpose; therefore it is against your personal security that you should any longer remain in this city; if you had quitted it yesterday it would have been better than to-day; be on your guard!" When I heard this dreadful piece of news my whole nature became changed from fear, and I said: "Virtuous old man! in which direction is it proper for me to move?" He took from his pocket a dice resembling those of the devil's jugglery, threw it into the water, and drank from it; he sneezed several times, inclined his head to his knees, raised it again, and traces of laughter appeared on his face. I said: "Venerable old man which way shall I go? I believe I discover in your physiognomy the signs of astonishment." He replied: "Dear friend! Whenever I drink the water of this little cube I am transported from the corporeal world into the spiritual, and ascertain various difficulties from the Genii. The fairy Sanjik was quarrelling with Kassur the genius, and gladness redounded to me from their words. Dear friend your destiny is open in the direction of the town of Balgar; fate and destiny have taken upon their backs the stores of your intention, but, as Saturn is in opposition with the star of your horoscope and the great archer Sagittarius influences the sign of your ascendancy, it is probable that you will encounter some mishaps; the Sun however which is the Lord of all, has thrown the ray of felicity into the mansion of your life, and protects the lamp of your existence from the contrary wind of all accidents, your soul is not in danger, and your

end is in conjunction with prosperity and welfare; nevertheless you ought by no means to defer your departure, for your events are noted down on earth and in heaven." He intimidated me so much by all sorts of ominous warnings that the Caravan of my life was almost ready to depart from the surface of existence to the region of annihilation. At noon I wished to eat something, but he prohibited me from it saying: "There is no necessity for eating; people who are excluded as yet from the delights of paradise, are incapacitated from enjoying them hereafter, unless they renounce the fat and sweet morsels of the table of covetousness; and the treasures of the stores of felicity will not consent to admit them into the Kaba of spiritual revelations and eternal exaltations." He placed his hand under his arm-pit and drew forth several skins of serpents in the form of long purses, and placed them empty upon the ground. Then he placed his hand into one of them and took out from it various savoury dishes, at which I was greatly astonished, having never seen the like, on the tables of kings. He began to eat and invited me also to partake of the repast, which I did, and never before have I tasted so delicious food. When we had finished our meal he replaced every thing that remained, into the skin, and it appeared to be as empty as before. I besought him for God's sake to tell me how these bags that look like the skins of serpents, could produce such excellent things. He said: "Hush! These are secrets which not every one is able to comprehend, and I am neither commanded nor permitted to reveal to the uninitiated, that, which makes its appearance from the invisible world. These purses are endowed with marvelous properties; you may draw from them whatever you like, and yon may put into them whatever you choose, and they will appear just as empty as before." He put his hands into one of them and brought out a string of pearls, each grain of which could not be redeemed with the tribute of a realm. He put his hands into another and called from it a woman, the scintillation of whose beauty dazzled the eyes of the sun himself. He again put his hand into another, and brought forth from it the finest dresses and wearing apparel, at which the

most extravagant imagination would be astonished. Then he made every thing to vanish again into the purses. When I saw all these miracles I was near to worship that man; I begged of him to let me have one of these bags as a remembrance of our friendship, the more so as I was about to start on a journey according to his direction. He placed one of them before me and I almost jumped up for joy, and considered this as the greatest possible gift which I could ever have obtained, and I rehearsed in imagination the incalculable benefits and immeasurable profits I would derive from its possession. He said: "Make the arrangements for your journey as long as it is yet in your power." He arose, took leave from me, and when he was about to go out, he asked me whether I knew anything about the circumstances of my former travelling companion. I replied: "What travelling companion?" He said: "The young man who was on board the ship with you during a tempest and to whom you promised to give one-tenth of all your property." I answered: "It is some time since I have not seen him." He shook his head and said:

VERSE.

Since when is this the custom of the honest!

Having said this, he went away. As I had not confided this secret to anybody, I was greatly troubled by his knowing it. Nevertheless as my whole being was now concentrated in the possession of the bag, I took no notice, but said to myself: "I have seen how much could be taken out of this purse, now I must try how much will enter its gizzard." I threw cash and goods into the bag still it remained empty, so I said to myself: "If it should be able to contain my whole property I do not see why I should not confide it to its keeping, instead of separating myself from my possessions, seeing that during my absence an accident might deprive me of every thing; whereas in this way I might carry away every thing in my pocket." So I continued to throw my property into the bag till it had swallowed up every thing and still seemed empty, I had occasion

for something in the evening so I meant to call it forth from the purse and went towards it, but it began to move, became a great serpent, opened its throat and pursued me, I ran out, still it ran after me, and there being an empty box outside, I took refuge in it in my trouble, and lost all consciousness. When I recovered my senses, I found myself lying on the sand near the sea, and two men near my head were exclaiming: "Wonder what enmity could have been the cause of this affair!" When I opened my eyes in consequence of their talk, they greeted me, and helped me to seat myself: I wiped my eyes, was astonished at my condition and said: "God be praised I see strange things, do I labour under a delusion or is this reality? Who are you, what place is this, how did I arrive here, and why am I in this condition?" They laughed and said: "These are the environs of the town of Balgar, this is the sea of Kalzam, and we are two fishermen, and are all day long engaged in fishing near the shore, this we did to-day also, and perceived something in the distance, it proved on a nearer approach to be a box, which we drew on shore, and found it to be protected by a coat of pitch; we broke the lock with great difficulty, opened it, and found that you were lying in it asleep like a dead man, we suspected you to have been killed by some enemy, but endeavoured to resuscitate you and succeeded to our satisfaction; you best know yourself what has happened to you before." I asked: "What is the distance from this place to Kashmir?" They said: "If the wind be favourable and no drawbacks occur, the voyage may be accomplished in four months; but by land the distance may be traversed in one year and a half." I wondered and said: "Last night I was in Kashmir and now it is not yet afternoon and I find myself here;" then I related my adventures to them; they said: "There are many sorcerers in the country of Hindustan and such events are not unusual, it is true that money and property are great advantages, still you ought to be thankful for having come off scott-free with your life." I lived for some time with those fishermen but from the disappointment of my hopes and the loss of all I possessed, I resembled a fish out of water strug-

gling to death in the filth of misery; I was melting like frankincense in the censer of restlessness. The fire of melancholy kindled by that accident had overpowered my soul, and the desire of recovering my property, strongly incited me to bend my steps again towards Kashmir. I entered the service of a merchant who was going to Hindustan with some others, and I paced Kashmir again after many trials; as the majority of the inhabitants of that place were acquainted with me, I was ashamed to make myself known to them; and being aware that all my misfortunes happened in consequence of my greediness and for breaking my vow, I took up my abode in the corner of a mosque; I prayed there for forty days, day and night and repented of my sins. One night, when grief had overpowered my soul I said this

PRAYER.

O God I am thy sinful worshipper,
I am totally immersed in the sea of guilt.
I have broken the promise I have made,
I have run the race of self-willedness and passion.
Although my sins are without number,
Thy grace is nevertheless my hope.
Thou commandest the dawn of hope to be changed into bright [morning,
Thou art the key to the treasury of gifts.
He places the key to your door; who humbly turns to it,
Will never be repelled disappointed.
Do not drive me hopeless from your door,
For nobody is prohibited from this threshold.

Lord! I confess the inhumanity which I manifested towards that young man, and acknowledge my guilt, and I am aware of deserving a thousand-fold the punishment which fell upon me. I now make to thee the most solemn promise, that if the aroma of thy favour's rose-garden again perfumes the nostrils of my hope, and the Joseph of the family of prosperity again returns to Canaan of my destiny, I shall never drink one drop of the goblet of life in opposition to thy pleasure; for, although I have transgressed, I sincerely repent, I hope not to be excluded from the treasure-house of thy unbounded mercy and forgive-

ness." That night I had taken such a hold of the ring of the door of supplication, that I remained sleepless; and in a vision I perceived the same old man who visited me on that day, but now he appeared to me lovely and venerable; so I began to reproach him for putting on the aspect of sanctity on the former occasion to induce me to follow his advice, and to lose all my property! He smiled and said: "Young man! You have evidently forgotten your own demeanour; have you never heard that,

VERSES.

The world is a house of retribution,
Endowed with the properties of a mirror,
No matter how you dress, you always see your reflexion in it.

The arrow of this misfortune which has struck the breast of your repose, was projected at yourself from the bow of your broken promise to that unhappy youth.

VERSES.

The price for each act is at hand,
To the good, good is meted out, to the evil, evil.
He will rejoice in both worlds,
The tree of whose heart bears good fruit.

Hamed! know, that I have been the tempest of that sea, by which your life was imperilled. But as you made a vow to give a part of your goods to that youth, and because the flames of accidents are extinguished by the limpid waters of good action; I let go the hold which I had upon your life and property, nevertheless I was always ready at your heels to see whether you would carry out your promise, and then again to return to my proper place. The yoke of the love of this world and your evil inclination pressed hard upon your neck; still I poured the water of indication upon your face of carelessness by means of that mendicant, hoping that you would awake from your sleep of insensibility and rescue him that suffered in the prison

of grief; this made no impression upon your levity, till at last the Joseph of your peace has been made a captive in the prison of this misfortune, and the device has been painted upon the page of your possessions. I delivered the tenth, due to that youth when he went to Gaznin, and the remainder I have buried in one of your apartments at Bosrah and entrusted it to the guardianship of one of the Genii who watches over it in the form of a feeble ant, so that no living creature may attempt to possess itself of your property. As you have now repented of your misdemeanors, and your name has been blotted out from the volume of guilt, you are to go to that youth, who is in the service of Sultán Mahamood the Gaznavide and is one of his chief courtiers, and you must beseech him to forgive you, then you may return to Bosrah." When I received in a vision these good tidings from that old man, I was greatly rejoiced, became perfectly convinced of my future prosperity, started from Kashmir to Gaznin, arrived here in the state of destitution in which you now see me, and I am much embarrassed how to present myself in this state to that youth, so that he may not be ashamed of me; and this is my story dear friend. That other man, who was the companion of Hamed, drew a deep sigh from the censer of his grieved heart, and having sent it to the zenith of anxiety said: "Dear brother you may congratulate yourself that the delirium of your reverses is over and that you may now safely expect a change for the better. I am a wretch, who does not know how his affairs will terminate at last. I am a native of Cabul and by my trade in pearls and connexion with the part of Bahrain I accummulated great riches. It happened last year, that on a winter-evening a traveller arrived at my house and said: 'Prosperous man! I am a poor fellow and come from a distant country; as I suffer from cold, and the night has overtaken me, I am unable to go any farther; your presence invites me to repose myself here to-night, and to continue my journey to-morrow as soon as the royal cavalier of the greater light has spread out his luminous standard; so I would humbly beseech you to allow me to pass the night under your roof.' I replied: 'My house is not a caravenserai, I am

not aquainted with you, I have many enemies, your arrival may blow the dust of perils upon the garment of my welfare; go your way; I am suspicious of strangers.' The traveller said: "If you do not know me, perhaps you know God! Has not He said? Turn not away him who asks?* I pray you for God's sake not to turn me away, and not to sell your reward for a good deed to another person." I continued: "I have been able to do without many blessings, and this is one of them." The poor man went away and stopped for the night at my neighbour's, who although a destitute old man was greatly given to hospitality; he accounted the approach of this stranger as a happiness and kept him in his house for some time, till he departed at last. The highwayman of covetousness having again plundered the Caravan of my tranquillity, impelled me to undertake an expedition to Bahrain, where I had often before gained considerable profits. I took all the money I possessed with me, borrowed some also from other merchants, and departed. Since prosperity and reverses are perpetually struggling with each other in this world, and whatever the former ties the latter unties, and each fire kindled by adversity is quenched by the showers of prosperity, and because each individual must travel on the autumnal and vernal road of changes, dominated by these two contending influences, through the garden of his circumstances; it happened that in this my undertaking adversity conquered, and prosperity took leave of me for good and for ever. In short: when I commenced business in Behrain I gradually disbursed all my cash to divers, I opened each shell which they brought up and found it empty; like the words of liars void of the pearls of truth. Thus I spent, and lost all the money I had accumulated for years, and gained nothing but regret. I was obliged to desist, and to surmount thousand difficulties till I was enabled to reach my country. On one side the hardships of poverty and the cares of supporting my family, and on the other, the obstinacy of my creditors, had barred the door of success against me; and I was sitting down in despair in my house, when I perceived a Caravan of nearly ten strings of

* This is a verse 93rd Sura of the Qorán.

camels, loaded with valuable linen, passing that way; there was no Caravanseraï in that direction, so I said to myself: 'Certainly they must have mistaken the road.' Meanwhile the Caravan stopped at the house of my neighbour, and they began to unload; I again said: 'They must have mistaken his house for a Caravanseraï;' but I was quickly told that the Caravan of God's blessing is staying at that house, because the owner of it had cherished hospitality, and harboured a guest who proved afterwards to have been a prince, flying from the wrath of his father, and having now succeeded to his throne the star of his good fortune had risen from the East of prosperity, and he had sent all this merchandize to his old host. The event of that night, the arrival of the prince, and the inhospitable morousness with which I repelled him, occurred to my mind at once, and I knew that if my unkindness had not cancelled the benefits that were in store for me, and if I had received him in a friendly way, he would have sent all these goods to me; at this time when my misery and distress began to culminate and my palate was watering for similar windfalls; the salt of this event only irritated and renewed the wound of my grief. I fled from that town like a madman, and it is some time since I err about like the whirl-wind, and burn my own liver with the fire of melancholy. The hand of my endeavours is unable to take hold of the skirts of good luck, and I am ignorant by what means the lamp of my welfare may be lighted." Hamed said: "Brother! Be of good cheer, when I again obtain my property I shall provide for you."

Sultan Mahmood had heard this whole conversation from behind a wall of the ruined building. When the beauty of morning began to show herself from beneath the veil of night, and the sun made his appearance on the throne of the East, Sultan Mahmood called the youth, to whom Hamed had formerly made the vow of delivering one-tenth of his property, and who happened to be at this time one of the Sultan's courtiers, and said to him: "I have good news for you;" and related to him his adventure of the past night. The youth said: "It is quite true, when I was going to Kashmir I was very poor, and

happened to be in the same ship with that merchant, when a great storm overtook us, and I was informed in a vision that he had made a vow to present me with one-tenth of his property; with this hope I arrived in Kashmir, but as I was disappointed in my expectation, I again went away; and as the fame of Your Majesty's name had reached me I turned towards this country. Before the ennobling sun of Your Majesty's regard had influenced my circumstances I went to a mosque and prayed to God, hoping that He would not disappoint my expectations like Hamed, I saw an old durvaish who showed himself to me as if it were in a dream, saying: "Fear not! You will rise to a high station." When I awoke I found near my head a purse made of the skin of a snake, upon it I read these words: "This is one-tenth of Hamed's property, which he made a vow to give away, take it and spend it, for other gifts are ready for you." The purse looked as if it were empty, but when I turned its aperture downwards nearly five thousand dirhems were poured out. I spent some of this money, and afterwards presented myself with the petition of my father to Your Majesty and became one of the dependants on Your Majesty's merciful regard; by it I rose to my present well-being, and although I have since spent considerable sums, the purse remains still in the same state." Sultan Mahmood said: "Since Hamed has suffered various reverses and is a man of feeling, do not mention any of your adventures to him, lest he become still more ashamed, but receive him with friendship and send him respectably to Bosrah." The young man hastened to his home, sent for the two companions in misfortune, who were in the ruined building, and ordered his people to take Hamed and his friend to the bath and to bring them into his presence after having clothed then in fine dresses. Hamed was sitting in the ruin with his companion, hungry and thirsty; thinking which way they should turn to get something to eat, and what they were to do; in the mean time the servants of that young man arrived, carried the two men to the bath, dressed and brought them into his presence. He welcomed Hamed, they related their adventures, and excused them-

selves to each other. Next day he took Hamed and his friend to the audience of Sultan Mahmood who also received them very kindly; they remained a few days longer in the town, during which the young man took it upon himself to entertain them most hospitably. When Hamed manifested his intention to depart to Bosrah, Sultan Mahmood and that young man, presented him and his companion with one hundred thousand dinars and much property, also with several Circassian and Greek slaves, and sent both to Bosrah with an escort of nearly five hundred men. When Hamed had arrived at Bosrah he went to the locality designated to him by the old man in the vision, and saw that there was an ant in the place; the ant noticed Hamed, made bows to him and bade him welcome; Hamed dug up the ground and discovered several locked chests, he opened them and found his whole property. After this Hamed inscribed upon the frontispiece of his heart and tongue the caligraphy of gratitude to the Most High; he also presented his friend of Cabul with considerable sums of money and sent him to his country. He disbursed the greater part of his money in alms and became anxious to be numbered with the righteous.

We ought to be kind to those who are in error, and also to the weak-minded and simple; like Nushirván, whom the chamberlain of his humane disposition would not permit to turn away a certain Arab empty handed from the store-house of his condescension, as it will appear from the following :—

STORY XX.

During the reign of Nushirvân, the handmaid of whose enlightened mind was waiting upon the bride of justice and good deeds, there happened to be such a dearth in one of the Arab tribes dwelling in the desert, that life became insupportable on

on account of the scarcity of food, and the lamentations of the poor people reached the ears of the inhabitants of the highest firmament. One of these Arabs took it upon himself to proceed to the presence of the Emperor Nushirván the just, and the cherisher of the poor, by the nail of whose compassion and humanity he expected the knot of this unhappy business to be solved. When the Arab started on his journey, he travelled for several days, till at last he came to the end of the desert in which he dwelt, and entered an oasis of pleasant aspect in which were trees and plants.

VERSES.

Fresh herbs on the banks of rivulets,
The morning breeze perfumed by ambergris.
The hyacinths within their ringlets,
Imprisoning the locks of the violets.

As that Arab had roamed about like the whirl-wind during his whole life in the scorching sun of the desert, and had never seen any flowers or grass except moving sands, nor any trees except stunted thorn-bushes, and had never tasted but brackish and bitter water ; he was delighted to see the tall trees and the various fragrant plants of the oasis, to drink the Kauther-like* water, and to enjoy the refreshing and exhilarating breeze. He had heard that God Almighty had made a garden in the other world in which are many pleasant things and where the pious are to go ; so he became firmly convinced of his having arrived in the promised paradise, and supposed that in consequence of his great sufferings and of his piety, the Most High had sent paradise to meet him in this world in order to rest himself in it for a few days. This he did, by amusing himself in promenading about, and picking up from the ground the ripe and unripe fruits that were half eaten by crows, monkeys, and other animals. He thought that more delicious fruits than these had not been created in any other part of the world ; he collected some and put them in a bag for a present to Nushirván, and

* Kauther is a river in paradise.

to convince him that he had been in paradise. After that he continued his journey towards the civilized world. When he approached the city to the distance of about ten Farasangs, Nushirván happened to be on a hunting expedition; the splendour of royalty engaged the Arab's attention, and made him aware that this was the Sovereign. He took out from his bag the distasteful dry fruits which were too unsavoury for the beasts of the forest, and approached Nushirván, carrying some fruit on the palm of his hand. When Nushirván had seen the Arab of the desert, he halted and said: "Arab! With the freight of what demand is the camel of your intention loaded? And what do you carry on the palm of your hand?" The Arab replied: "May the tree of Your Majesty's prosperity always remain fruitful! My object is to obtain the benefits which result from approaching the threshold of the Kibla* of the world. On my hand I carry the fruits of paradise, which I gathered when I passed through it, and these delicious fruits are a present to Your Majesty." Nushirván guessed the true state of things and accepted the fruits; he knew that the Arab had never been in cultivated places, had never seen fields nor gardens, had only heard the names of fruits and had supposed that forest to be the garden of paradise. He said: "You are right; these are the fruits of paradise, such gifts are exquisite, and I must preserve them in my treasury for a blessing." Then he asked the Arab to explain his request. The Arab detailed the famine, poverty and distress of his people. Nushirván gave him ten thousand dinars to be disbursed among his tribe till further assistance could be sent, and took leave of him with great demonstrations of affability. When the bystanders and courtiers had heard about the fruits of paradise, and had seen the emperor receiving them all from the Arab, they became anxious to know about these fruits; after they had proceeded some distance, one who was a little bolder than the others addressed the emperor thus: "To-day we have seen something

* Kibla is the direction of the temple of Mecca to wiz. the Kaba, to which Mahommedans turn when they pray. The reigning king of Persia is also now addressed as the *Kibla of the world.*

entirely at variance with the habits of Your Majesty; an Arab who had arrived from a great distance, has been sent back, without entering the city; and Your Majesty ought to have allowed us to partake of those fruits of paradise, that we might sweeten our palates by their exquisite flavour." Nushirván burst into laughter and distributed some of the fruit. They were astonished and said: "How could these things be called the fruits of paradise." Nushirván said: "You ought to know that the Arab had never seen a garden, nor tasted fruits, but had lived his whole life in the desert; when he entered a forest he supposed it to be the garden of paradise. I would not let you have any of the fruits, while he was present, because it would have given him pain. I sent him away, and would not invite him to see the city and our splendid gardens lest he should be put to shame, and discontented with his circumstances." They all praised the manner in which the emperor had acted; and when he arrived in the city he sent two hundred camels loaded with provisions to that Arab tribe.

Being aware of the imperfections of human nature, also of the sudden impulses and well digested stratagems by which men will obtain their ends; we must never place implicit confidence in strangers, or people with whom we are not well acquainted, lest we be injured like king Corneel was, by the machinations of a fox.

STORY XXI.

Once upon a time a merchant brought a white monkey to the king of the Franks whose name was Corneel; this monkey was

so intelligent that he stringed the pearls of speech with the awl of eloquence and conversed with great fluency in several languages, and might have been giving lessons of oratory to the nightingales of Arabic and Persian elegance. In the treasury of his mind lay stored various attractive narratives to relate which, centuries would not suffice. Often he was relating well-poised anecdotes or he dispelled the cares of the king (by recounting the events of ancient times,) of whom he became by degrees such a favourite that he could not spare him one moment from his presence; in course of time the monkey became such a proficient in the transaction of business and the administration of laws, that nobody approached the royal presence without his penetrating the whole affair by his intelligent shrewdness and giving his opinion in a very lucid and satisfactory way; so that the king ordered a State-chair to be placed for him, on which he was sitting and deciding every day the causes of everybody who had a request or a complaint to make, and administering justice to the gentle and to the simple, to the rich and to the poor. In the evening he was amusing and advising the king in official business, so that the latter had no more recourse to the opinions of his viziers and ministers, and they were all freed from the importunities of clients, except only one of the viziers who professed great friendship for the monkey; all the others were astonished at the great favour which the monkey enjoyed, and were apprehensive that evil might accrue to the State and to the king from placing such confidence in an animal notoriously treacherous and deceitful; although they did not know how to apprize the king of their fears without offending him, they were nevertheless determined to get rid of the monkey in some way or other; at that time the king happened to suffer from a malady which no physicians could mitigate or remove; one day he was quite beside himself with pain; when the monkey became aware of this, he deeply inclined himself and said: "May the hosts of sufferings and disease be repelled from Your Majesty by the assistance of the army of God's mercy, and may they be scattered to the winds from the region of your blessed existence!

HAFEZ.

May your body have no need of physicians,
May your precious person be untroubled by pain.

The welfare of the world depends from your Majesty's health. In the country from which I come there is a medicine, that cures all sorts of ailments, and it is called : *the essence of health ;* if Your Majety would graciously permit me to go to my birth-place two advantages would result from it; the first is, that I have a mother who suffers from the pain of being separated from me, and since I am in Your Majesty's service I have had no news from her or about her circumstances; to visit her is also according to the commands of God, and I shall inform her in what exalted position I am ; she will unite her prayers with mine, for the prolongation of Your Majesty's life. The second advantage is that I shall bring some of that medicine, which will become the cause of the restoration of Your Majesty's health, and of the vivification of the world." The king replied : " I am so much accustomed to your society that I can bear the pain of my disease for years longer, rather than deprive myself of your presence, the more so, as some accident might hinder you from returning, and thus you would forget the salt of gratitude, and extinguish the lamp of faithfulness." The monkey replied : " My Lord ! Although I belong to the race of animals, and am excluded from the circle of humanity; I am tied to you with the bonds of thankfulness, and please God I shall for ever try to serve you.

VERSE.

I shall not disobey you as long as my soul remains in the body.

I request to be allowed leave of six months, that I may visit my mother and bring the medicine ; after which I shall again do my best in your service." The king ordered the collar to be taken off from the neck of the monkey and said : " I confide in your fidelity and hope you will not forget me; my mind will always be engaged in remembering you." The monkey took respectful

leave and travelled till he safely arrived in his own country which was not far from India. He visited his mother, who was burning and melting with grief on account of his absence. She was very happy to see him; and the news of his arrival having spread, the small and great hastened to meet him, and eagerly inquired where he had been and in what he had been engaged? He replied: "All that time I enjoyed the protection of the human race, and the love I bore to it, became the obstacle to my return." They continued: "Your assertion is at variance with all received opinions, the race of men is notorious for its treachery and oppression, they have not the light of honesty, and instead of it tyranny shines from their foreheads, and that is their nature. It is perfectly astonishing that they have left you alive till now." The monkey said: "Dear friends! Your opinion is in opposition to facts; because other animals, on account of the enmity and hatred which they harbour towards mankind have thus denigrated them in your eyes. It is a long time since I have intercourse with them, and experience only kindness from them." They said: "How is it that they have let you go, and with what cunning did you escape from their grasp." He continued: "I was not fettered except with the chain of love, but the king who received me into his favour, is labouring under a grievous distemper, and has permitted me to come, in order to bring for him some of the *Essence of health.* I have been so well treated by all men, that I shall never willingly separate myself from them as long as I live, and I shall never cease to remember them." When the mother of the monkey had heard this she knew that her son was again bent upon returning. She said: "Dear son! How much trouble did I have to bring you up, hoping you would at all times be my consolation and my comforter. The spring season of my youth has been withered by the bitterness of separation from you; and now that I am old I have no other help but you; by intending again to return, you grieve me; disobedience to your mother is an obstacle on the road to felicity, and a transgression of the commands of God, whom you ought to fear and thus take pity on me. It is possible that I shall die deserted by everybody and thus my body would become the

prey of wild beasts." The monkey said: "Mother! It is true what you assert, but we must trust in the goodness of God, for his favour is far more valuable than the love of all children and relatives. You have past the meridian of life, and I am only beginning to rise towards it; I like to enjoy life and the company of men, and I dislike to roam about in the wilderness with those of my own species; it is possible that if I should be forced to remain here, sadness and melancholy would make my soul the target for the arrows of this grief, and extinguish the lamp of my life; it would be quite in conformity with maternal love, if you were to take no umbrage at my altered circumstances, and not propose an affair, the result of which would be only loss to both parties." When the mother of the monkey discovered that she could not succeed by coaxing, she concluded that the foot of the choice, and the neck of her sons shrewdness must be tied with the halter of deceit and cunning, so as to induce him to give up his intention of again leaving her, and of abandoning her to the scorching heat of grief. In that oasis there happened to live a badger of the name of Karteel who was a sorcerer and exercised himself for years in the tricks of roguery and deception; all the animals of that region, who fell into any difficulties, resorted to him for advice, and he solved their troubles with the nails of knowledge. The mother of the monkey went to that badger and said: "You, whose opinion is the guide of every one in embarrassment, and the nail of whose expedients disentangles all difficulties; I have approached you, to request you to devise a plan by means of which I might retain my dear son, without whom to live it would be very difficult to me." Karteel answered: "He has been captivated by the charms of intercourse with human beings and by their cunning: for although the elephant and the lion are far stronger than themselves; by flattery and cunning, they have tamed them, and keep them within the net of their society from which they are unable to escape. Even wild birds they so entangle with the snares of their love, that when their bonds are loosed and they are left to go where they list, they will return to their goalers. There is a remedy however for your

case, and if that does not succeed there is no help. I mean that you should administer to him a cup of the all absorbing beverage of love, so as to blot out from his memory the desire of returning to human beings; because nothing can cope with the powerful influence of love, and the heart which is entirely captivated by it becomes incapable of yielding to other passions. There is not a greater tyrant than love, it neutralizes the attractive force which the father exerts upon his offspring, it changes Islam into unbelief, and reason into lunacy.

VERSES.

Love changes Plato into a madman,
And the river Jihoon into a fiery oven.
If the lips only are moistened from the cup of love,
The whole body will be pervaded by it."

The mother of the monkey said: "How shall I put this plan into practice." Karteel replied: "In this forest there is a fox called Abu Churbal who married a badger, and by him she* has a daughter called Gazalah, who is of wonderful beauty and sweet speech; the meridian-enthroned Sun is imprisoned in the chains of her ringlets fragrant with ambergris; and the gazelle of the skies has run mad after the black mole on her cheek. Many of the animals of this region have drawn the blue mark of desire upon their forcheads and have tasted the nectar of attachment to her. Abu Churbal is her mother, and would not listen to the matrimonial overtures of anybody, but keeps her like the pearl of her existence sitting within the mother-shell of her intimacy. Should your son catch a single glimpse of that heart-rejoicing moon, it is very probable, that the Joseph of his choice would fall into the well of attachment to her incomparable beauty, and would for ever renounce his design. Abu Churbal is very expert in the science of Geomancy, you must send your son to her to ascertain his fate and future; by this means the bird of his intention

* It is a vagary of the author to make Abu Churbal a female since *Abu* means father.

will turn away from his purpose and the fountain of love will extingnish the fire of the inclination which he bears for the human race." When the mother of the monkey had received this information from Karteel she took leave of him, hastened to her dwelling, and said to her son: "As I always have your well-being deeply at heart, and as you do not intend any longer to stay with me, and the sun of my life has nearly attained the west of its decline, I do not feel much attached to it; but it is necessary that you should keep my circumstances in view and ascertain on what day I am to depart from this life, and afterwards you may act as you like." He replied that this would be impossible. His mother said: "I know a she fox by the name of Abu Churbal who lives in a cave not far from us, and who is very skilled in Geomancy and in all sorts of strange sciences, she can give an account of everybody's past and future condition. Go to her, give her my best compliments, and request her to throw a glance at my destiny." The monkey went to Abu Churbal and having made a polite bow, delivered his message; Abu Churbal took in hand the apparatus of Geomancy, but she had hardly commenced, when her daughter Gazalah entered the hermitage; the monkey took notice of her great beauty, and handsome stature; he at once lost the peace of his mind and the tempest of love wholly absorbed him like a fiery dragon who inhales chaff and straw to aliment his flame; he lost his senses and hastened to the desert, and the Laila of his love incited the Majnun of his heart to roam about the mountains and valleys. It became evening and he had not yet returned, so his mother waited for a few days and at last came to the conclusion that he had again returned to mankind. Another monkey passed through the desert and saw him wandering about in a state of distraction, so he reported it to his mother; who went in search of her son till she at last found him crying and exclaiming.

VERSES.

Morning breeze kindly say to that tender fawn,
That she has exiled me into deserts and mountains.

When she discovered her dear son to be so excited and the flower of his melancholy blossoming from the breeze of lunacy, she thus addressed him: "Darling of my soul what misfortune has happened to you?" And why are you so excited? He replied:

VERSES.

"If I take away the sleeve from my eye and the hand from my mouth,
My sighs and tears will fill heaven and earth.

Beloved mother, why have you sent me to the geomancer, there I have seen Gazalah and have fallen madly in love with her." His mother endeavoured to solace him, but to no purpose. He said: "Dear mother, there is no remedy for me nor hope for my life." She began to repent, and said: "What a stone I have thrown at the bottle of my boy's welfare, and what a thorn of calamity I have placed on the road of his sanity!" She hastened to Karteel asking him: "What elixir of machination have you administered to my son to lay him prostrate on the couch of lunacy. From this accident he will lose his life; had he returned to the human race I would at least have indulged the hope that he remained alive. I gave into this scheme myself, and the stain of this disaster will abide upon my conscience. This business cannot be altered except by yourself." Karteel said: "The remedy is at hand, he must be married to the object of his passion, in order to calm it." The mother of the monkey felt embarrassed, and asserted that she had no experience in such transactions, Karteel however who was on terms of great intimacy with Abu Churbal undertook the business of a go-between, and after a prelude he broached the proposition to Abu Churbal in the following way:— "Thanks be to God the sun of Gazalah's beauty is shining in the firmament of perfection, and as men of distinction and intellect have compared girls with fruits, affirming that when they are ripe the former must be married and the latter eaten, I should think that Gazalah ought not to be kept any longer in a state of single-blessedness. Abu Churbal replied: "What

you say is in conformity with usage and law, but how could I, whose whole existence is interlaced with her's, and who has no other comforter in the world but her, separate myself from her? Besides this, her accomplishments and her worth are more apparent than day-light, and she requires a husband like herself. Many have paid her attentions but as they were of a different species, and did not come up to the standard of her ability, I did not countenance their endeavours." Karteel said: "I have a husband in view for her in case he should consent; because he is of high lineage and of respectable connexions, if we should bring about this match, it would be of great advantage." Abu Churbal asked who it was? Karteel replied: "I have an adopted son of the tribe of monkeys, his name is Mahtal and he is in all respects perfect above comparison.

VERSES.

In stature like a cypress in beauty like the moon,
In understanding and shrewdness accomplished.
In his origin and nobility without an equal,
All his qualities are amiable and pleasing.

As the success of this affair will be of very good consequences, and very profitable in this world and in the next, and also because now is the propitious hour, I have proposed this alliance to you." Abu Churbal said: "This event depends from the good pleasure of the ruler of destinies, the bridegroom however is not of our species, and an union with him would perhaps be of bad consequences; his temperament and nature have been nourished by different food and climate, and are more distant from ours than light is from darkness, or liberality from covetousness; so that it is barely possible that the intended couple would be attracted to each other by love, or that they would be able to repose upon the pillow of tranquility; and how much less will they be inclined to sow the seed of mutual affection into each other's heart.

VERSES.

Association between two opposites,
Is more impossible than the union of winter and summer.
The dove and vulture will never be friends,
With all the skill of Plato and the philosophy of Lokman.
Do not look for agreement and friendship in those who differ in species,
Rain is inimical to the stream of fire."

Karteel said: "This doctrine is not universal, because if it were carried out, those who are of different species could never unite, neither could intellect spread the carpet of amity for both parties, nor their exalted nature prohibit them from acting contrary to the laws of gentleness and love. The corporeal and the spiritual world, the rose and the philomele, may mix with each other for ever without a breath of hypocrisy or interruption of love. Since both of them are of a very noble disposition, what likelihood is there that they will ever transgress it even for one moment?" When Karteel the hermit had brought the affairs thus far Abu Churbal interrupted him saying: "I do not wish to act contrary to the advice of a friend so dear to me as you, but I extremely dislike to be separated from my daughter Gazalah, and it would fall very heavy upon me. If the monkey agrees to dwell with us, the pearls of this affair will be easily threaded upon the string of arrangement; if not, then our alliance is severed." Karteel said: "Let no such doubts dismay you, because as long as I have a finger in the pie, I shall not do anything to displease you." Karteel hoped that all would end well and took leave. He hastened to inform the mother of the monkey, who in her turn gave the news to her son Mahtal, and brought him to make his obeisance to Karteel. Karteel said: "Monkey! I congratulate you! For, a wonderful tree of felicity has grown from the humble plant of your hopes, and a lovely wife has fallen to your lot, provided you will cease to have any more intercourse with the human race and altogether renounce that foolish idea." The monkey placed the finger of approbation upon the eyes of acknowledgment and said: "God forbid that I should disobey my queen. Karteel invested

the body of the monkey with the preparatory robe of a husband and took him to Abu Churbal. The Kazi of all the tribes of animals was invited ; and also the chiefs of the wild beasts, and other guests of the forest and plain being assembled, the rejoicing commenced, and Gazalah was married to the monkey in due form and according to the approved fashion. After the monkey had been married for some time, the ardour of his love became refrigerated by this union with lady Gazalah, and the tempest of his sea of attachment was calmed. The promise which he had made to the King occurred to his mind, and he began to consider how foolish he had been to shackle his pledged faithfulness by family ties and how it would be impossible to him to resort to human society with as light a heart, as when he was single ; and how the freedom and happiness of his intercourse would be marred by the absence of his family. He also knew that his mother-in-law would hardly agree that he should take Gazalah with him ; he also dreaded to break his word and would on no account offend the king his benefactor by staying away. All this he confided one night to Gazalah, to which she replied : " Darling of my heart ! Life would be unbearable to me without you ! Wherever you go I shall be with you, and as I have heard much about men, I should like to be in their society for a few days". The monkey said : " Will your mother agree to this ?" She replied : " As long as I lived in her house she had authority over me, but now I am in your power ; and if you are in earnest about it what can she do?" The monkey promised to his wife that he would explain the affair to her mother, and so he did. Abu Churbal said : " Leave Gazalah to stay with me till you again return, if you are tired to remain here ;" but Gazalah overheard this and exclaimed : " God forbid that I should stay for half a moment without my dear husband, I shall follow his steps, and will return when he returns." Abu Churbal continued : " This is a dangerous undertaking, do not suppose it to be like going to your aunt's or to your uncle's ; men are a merciless race, and full of deceit ; something might happen to you which would turn upside down the nest of my peace. You know that I have no other child

besides you, do not act so as to place me into the fire of separation from you, and to subject me to the torments of solitude." Gazalah replied: "I am not a whit better than Mahtal, whatever accident happens to him I am ready to suffer it also; because a faithful wife is a priceless pearl and no efforts of any diver can in any sea, ever find one to match it. Thrice blessed is the wife who sacrifices her very life for a husband worthy of her." When Abu Churbal saw that no efforts of hers were able to influence Gazalah, she said to her: "What you say is true, I made a great mistake in marrying you to a husband who is not of your species, and every one who does that, reaps repentance only." As Abu Churbal had been all her life engaged in various tricks and intrigues she enjoyed great reputation among the animals, and was meditating in the following way:—"There is a medicine by which every disease may be cured, and a stratagem by which every affair may be brought to the desired end. Since Mahtal is so much attached to the human race, it is possible, that if Gazalah accompanies him, he will never return, and I shall be obliged to suffer for ever the pain of separation, so I must think of an arrangement by which Mahtal might be so disgraced in the sight of the king, that it will become impossible to him, to live among men; in that way he will quickly send Gazalah to me again, and will never think of travelling any more." She turned all this over in her mind and thus spoke to Mahtal: "If you are so much intent upon leaving us, you may; but you must not neglect to take care of Gazalah, even for one moment, since her fidelity to you does not permit her to let go the skirts of your company, it is but just, that you should be very kind to her." Mahtal was highly pleased with this; he procured the medicine which he had promised to the king, entrusted it to Gazalah, and he himself arranged everything for their departure. Abu Churbal mixed the medicine, without the knowledge of Gazalah, with poison; and when they were ready to start she said: "Since mankind are a faithless race, they must not be trusted, their friendship is quickly changed into enmity, and the fruits of kindness which you have experienced from them will soon fall away from the tree of their

manners, therefore I send my brother with you, that he may retire with Gazalah to some secret place during the first few days of your arrival among men; if you discover in the lamp of friendship of that race the rays of kindness, you may take Gazalah among them; but if you see anything to the contrary, as you are to be alone, it will be easy for you to draw yourself out of any scrape, and to return to me again with Gazalah and my brother, in the same way as you have gone away." Abu Churbal instructed openly her brother who was a cunning fox and skilled in all sorts of intrigues, but she told him secretly of her having sown the grains of a stratagem into the field of foresight, and that all he had to do was to hide himself with Gazalah in a cave when they were near the habitations of men, and there to wait during ten days for the return of Mahtal. Should he not rejoin them within that time, they were not to wait for him any longer, because some misfortune must have happened to him, so they were to retrace their steps. Abu Churbal took leave of Gazalah of Mahtal and of her brother Kartas, and all three of them having departed, they journeyed till they arrived in the vicinity of human dwellings, when Gazalah remained behind with her uncle, and Mahtal went forward alone. It happened that on that day the king remembered Mahtal and said to his courtiers: "What do you think of the return of the monkey?" Some one who was inimical to him said: "Please Your Majesty! It is highly improbable that an animal which has escaped from the bonds of obedience to man should again throw away the reins of contentment, and leave its own species, again to become shackled with the fetters of command and prohibition. From this species we must not expect fidelity, and sugar-canes must not be planted in brackish soil." The friends of the monkey said, that as he had experienced much kindness from His Majesty, and as this is similar to pure gold, the smallest particle of which, if given to any person, will never allow him to deviate from the path of submission, it is probable that he will again return. They were engaged in this conversation, when the monkey made his entrance, placed his head upon the floor of obedience, and presented the medicine which he had

brought for the king. His Majesty was very kind to him and his friends were very happy; the king happened to be suffering that day from his disease and asked the monkey about the way in which the medicine must be taken; the monkey answered that one grain of it was to be put into water and drunk with it, and that the remainder was to be kept safe in the treasury, because such a medicine is not accessible even to kings. The king called for water, put some of the medicine into it, and wished to drink it; the vizier, who had often before warned the king from trusting the monkey too much, and whom the king supposed to be only malevolent, arose from his place and said: "Please Your Majesty! Gratitude for benefits and favours received does not enter into the nature of animals endowed with an imperfect understanding.

VERSES.

He who looks for gratitude in animals is like him,
Who expects a star to shine like the brilliant sun.

Our ancestors, by reason of their wisdom, have never placed confidence in people of a different species, it is possible that even in this instance they have been planning mischief. Kings have many enemies, and this world is full of accidents. The foundations of affairs and transactions are built upon cunning and deceit, it would be better to kill a thousand such monkeys than that the life of Your Majesty should be imperilled. What advantage is there to anybody that my advice should be of less consequence in Your Majesty's eyes than that of a monkey and his friends; his impudence and forwardness has emboldened me to give vent to my feelings, and it remains with Your Majesty to judge." Others again who were warmly attached to the monkey affirmed that there is not a living being fond of life which would uselessly risk it to attain any object; but least of all a monkey who is an intelligent animal and had experienced great favours. Evil intentions originate with people who aspire to regal authority: it is evident that the monkey could not

harbour such projects. It is mean and ungenerous to entertain such groundless suspicions about him. The king approved of this opinion and said: "I have full confidence in this monkey; and taking up the medicine drank it out." At that moment great trembling pervaded his body; all his members became powerless, and his spirit returned to his Creator. The prudent vizier rubbed the hands of regret upon each other and said:

VERSES.

In the society of the dishonest, there is danger to the pious,
If the bow be entangled, the arrow falls to the ground.

The friends and adherents of the king drew their swords and daggers, and cut to pieces the monkey with all his friends; they established the son of the king upon the throne of his father and made the prudent vizier his prime-minister. After Kartas and Gazalah had waited for ten days, and saw that the monkey was not coming, they knew that a misfortune must have happened to him; so both of them returned to the oasis, and betook themselves to Abu Churbal, who had by this trick eluded the uncongenial alliance with the monkey.

Those who are contented with their condition, and do not covet anything, will not be disappointed; this also appears from the following:—

STORY XXII.

In ancient times there were two men of the inhabitants of Kabul who were sitting in the corner of poverty, fettered with the chains of hardships and difficulties; the thunder-storms

and disturbance of the whirl-pools of the revolution of the spheres had overturned the boat of their possessions, and it had become the prey of the whale of destruction. They were screwed in the press of poverty and destitution, like flower-buds from which the oil is to be squeezed out, and the pain and suffering of distress caused them to change colour at each moment like a chameleon till each day was changed into evening. Although they were hastening with the foot of labour and diligence in the performance of their occupations, they could never reach the desired mansion of their object on account of their unpropitious fortune and their constant mishaps. The blackness of their morning tinctured the night even of the poor with the reflexion of grief, and the mirror of their evening imparted new sorrow to orphans. One day they said to each other: "In this country the gates of peace are shut upon us, and it is a maxim of the wise, that, if people meet with difficulties in their own country they ought to remove to another. As the liberal Sultan Mahmood is now reigning, we must go to Gaznin and do our best to meet him, and perhaps the aroma of his generosity will perfume the nostrils of our intention, and our dilapidated circumstances will be bettered. They started from Kabul towards Gaznin, and on the road a man joined company with them, the rose-bush of whose disposition was always kept fresh by the dew of piety and who past his life in contentment like one of the blessed. He asked them: "My brethren! The shoe of what desire have you put on the foot of your intention? And towards the castle of what pretension have you turned the face of your inclination?" They said: "Since the lamp of the well-being of both of us has been extinguished by the wind of misfortune and the thorn of hardships has pierced the feet of our hearts, and as we could not find the plaster in Kabul by which the wound of our untoward circumstances might be healed, and as we hear that the gates of the generosity and liberality of Sultan Mahmood the Gaznavide have been opened to the rich and to the poor, and that the banquet of his unbounded graciousness is always spread for the relief of the poor; we hope to re-light the lamp of our distressing condition at the blaze of his

48818

regard." Those two men also asked the young man about his intention, to which he replied: "Having no possessions in my country, and the day of my well-being having reached the evening, I am in pursuit of a lawful support, I do not however expect anything from Sultan Mahmood or people similar to him; I covet the grace and favour of a Sultan, the door of the treasury of whose gifts is besieged by a hundred thousand men as indigent as Sultan Mahmood, and who are contemplating with the eye of hope the store-house of his infinite grace and bounty." In fine, the three travellers journeyed together till they arrived in Gaznin and took up their abode in a ruined building. One night all three of them were sitting together in the ruin, and were conversing on various subjects. It happened that Sultan Mahmood with Ayaz and Khojah Memendi had left the palace in order to walk about in the moon-shine; they passed through various streets and lanes till they came near the ruin, and following the voices they discovered the travellers and asked them who they were? Two of them answered: "We are benumbed by the crapula of the wine of helplessness and distress, we are veiled by the curtain of misery, we are riding the horse of poverty and are roaming through the ups and downs of this world, and now our fate has guided us to this place and we shall see how our affairs will terminate." The Sultan said: "What are your wishes?" They answered: "If we tell them, they will never be accomplished. So there is no use in relating them." The Sultan replied: "Since the inhabitants of this world are bound to aid each other, it is your duty to inform me of your desires in order that the complicated knot of that affair may be disentangled by the help of some one's nail." One of them replied: "I was one of the rich and prosperous, and possessed great wealth. This world which is inconstant like the hues of the chameleon, has ceased to be propitious to me; and the shame of poverty and the disgrace of my family have induced me to quit my country; should I be able to acquire ten thousand dinars, I would consider them as a capital which might enable me to raise my head again and to return to my country." The other said: "I had a wife sitting veiled in

the Harem of compliance, the loveliness of the sun of her features surpassed the rose in beauty, and the moon was lessened in splendour by the rays of her cheeks; I loved her much, and could not live one moment without her; she happened to die, and the fire of that grief has burnt my liver and has thrown me into the most unfortunate circumstances. Should His Highness the Ameer present me with a female of his Harem, so that by the sun of her presence the mansion of my joy and happiness might become illuminated, I would gladly return to my country." The third companion remained silent; the Sultan turned to him and said: "Do you not wish for anything?" He answered: "I have to do with God, I need neither a wife nor gold; I turn my face towards the vivifying treasury of God's mercy, by whom desires are granted, who knows the innermost recesses of our hearts, and what everybody deserves; my wishes are all regulated by his good pleasure; if you are in the enjoyment of God's favour and are able from him to obtain your desires, pray to Him for my sake that He may grant me the grace that I should not once draw my breath contrary to His will." The Sultan said nothing but arose, and departed. When the chamberlain of destiny had opened the gates of light upon the inhabited world, and the world-illuminating king, the sun, had seated himself in the azure tent of the upper sky, the Sultan ordered the three strangers that were in the ruin, to be brought into his presence; which was done immediately. When they perceived the Sultan, they knew him to be the same man, who had been with them last night, and they were under the apprehension that he would perhaps be angry with them; the Sultan called them forward, and inquired of each of them his wants; those two men repeated the same sentiments which they had uttered on the previous evening, when the third stranger's turn came, he said.

VERSES.

Bitter indeed is to our lips the coloquinth of mendicancy,
We have tasted the sweets of liberality from the hands of the noble minded.

Oh thou illuminated speculum of potentates, as long as the store-house of the works of God is full of blessings, may also the treasury of thy desires remain plentifully provided with the exhilarating gold, silver and the jewels of prosperity. Although people in general may be rejoicing with the delicacies of the table of thy bountifulness, and thyself mayest thereby taste the sweets of good deeds; still, those that sit in the tent of exquisite feelings have so much refreshed their palates with the honey of contentment that they would by no means defile their lips with a single mouthful that belongs to others.

VERSES.

The palate of the contented has never been sweetened by the liberal,
The delights of independence are far above the delights which liberality bestows.

My hopes and expectations are dependent from the threshold of the eternal king; he will grant to me all that he thinks fit, without my hanging myself on the skirts of petition to anybody else, or jeopardizing the position of a retiring and modest individual." The Sultan tried much, but could not induce that young man to act in contradiction to his avowed principles, and to open his lips in order to beg for some favour; the Sultan gave orders that the man who was in want of a wife should be provided with one of his own girls; she also presented the man who wanted money, with two purses of gold and said: "Now all three of you, go to your respective countries." In obedience to this order they started together on their journey to Kabul. After they had proceeded for about two farasangs, the man who obtained the gold felt tired of carrying it, so he handed it to his empty handed companion, beseeching him to carry it for a short time until he rested himself. The chronicler relates that when those three young men left the presence of the Sultan, he turned to his courtiers and said: "That independent man has put me greatly to shame, he left me as if I were in the position of a poor man; and although I tried much, he would not accept of anything." One of his courtiers

who was labouring under the asthma of covetousness, (and as the covetous are the natural enemies of the contented) his innate feeling broke out and he vented it saying: "The Sultans and kings of this world are the collectors of the treasury of God, and according to the requirements of the order of mundane affairs, He grants drafts or letters of credit to the poor for the alleviation of their wants, which drafts the rich are bound to honour and accept. Whoever refuses to apply to kings for help scorns their favour, and in this manner, he acts contrary to the will of God on account of his pride and independence. Such a man is certainly deserving of death and ought to be punished." The Sultan became excited and ordered one of his chamberlains to proceed on the same road which the three men had taken, and letting alone the man who had the gold, and him who had the girl, to kill the third person who was empty handed, and to bring his head. It happened however, that when the messenger of the Sultan arrived, the independent man carried the gold on his back, and the possessor of the gold was empty-handed. The servant of the Sultan made no enquiry but cut off the head of the proprietor of the gold, and carried it into the presence of his master. When the Sultan had looked well at the head, he exclaimed: "You are a thoughtless fellow and have made a mistake!" He despatched forthwith another chamberlain and enjoined him to decapitate that man who was without any burden whatever. It happened that the possessor of the girl had entrusted her for a time to the independent man, and had gone aside from the road on account of some business; when the chamberlain arrived, he perceived the owner of the girl following empty-handed in the wake of the independent man; he immediately cut off his head and presented it to the Sultan; after the Sultan had cast a glance at the head he exclaimed with astonishment: "This man also was killed by mistake." He considered for a while, and when he became calm, he perceived that the grace of God had been a bulwark and a protection to that independent man, which had prevented him from coming to any harm. He summoned another attendant and commanded

him to pursue the same road and to bring the man into his presence who possessed both the gold and the girl, which he immediately did. As soon as the Sultan perceived the man he smiled and said: "What has become of your companions?" The youth answered: "May the life of the Ameer be everlasting, and may the compliant hand of the sweet-heart prosperity be always round his neck! He who presented them with the gold and with the maid, has in return taken their lives from them; and indeed, whoever prefers the creature to the Creator, turns away his face from the threshold of real felicity, has no refuge where he might flee to, will become trampled under the feet of distressing events, and will not pluck a single flower from the rose-garden of his desires.

COUPLET.

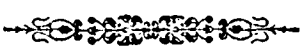
Whoever averts his face from His portals,
Will meet with no regard to whatever door he turns."

This effusion of the man awakened the Sultan from the sleep of indolence and made him aware that this individual had tasted the sweets of benefits from the spread-table of the love and knowledge of God. He said: "Thou ornament of the society of obedience to the laws of God! I am very anxious to bestow something upon you, that I may become infinitely obliged to you. I adjure you by God, to ask something from me!" That happy man answered: "I have two wishes: the first is, that you send a very considerable sum of money to Kabul to conciliate the heirs of those two men who have been killed without any guilt of their own; and the second is, that I may be allowed to enjoy the lease of a small dwelling, in which to carry on the trade of a weaver, so that I may earn an honest livelihood." The Sultan stroked the face of agreement with the finger of acquiescence and said: "You flower gatherer of the gardens of beneficence I also have three requests to make to you with which I expect your kindness will comply; the first is: that, if you should harbour any ill feeling towards me I beg you to forget it; the second is, that you pray to God that

He may blot out my sins from the book of my actions with reference to those two innocent men; and the third is, that you come to me each Friday evening so that I may profit by my intercourse with you." The man agreed to all this and applied himself in the mean time assiduously to his business, till his singleness of purpose placed him in possession of the key to prosperity and wealth, and the gates of well-being having become opened in correspondence with his expectation, he was enabled to advance money to the royal treasury whenever it was in want of it, and to redeem many people from the penalty of death, and thus to accomplish much good with reference also to worthy, and to poor people.

The moral of this tale is: that those who quaff wine from the goblet of contentment, are of the number of those, whom the Creator favours with his blessings; and their nest being always illuminated by the lamp of the perfect gifts of the Most High, they will, in contradistinction to the envious and the greedy, always be seated on the throne of esteem and consideration.

Whosoever solaces the palates of the indigent with the honey of liberality, will in his turn be distinguished by the Giver of all good gifts, like that woman upon whom He showered gold, silver and blessings.



STORY XXIII.

The chronicler informs us that at the time when the rays of the favour of the Most High illumed the age in which the Lord David (upon whom be peace) lived, and in which, the stature of his high capacities being invested with the adorning robes

of prophecy, he enjoyed supreme dominion; an old woman made her appearance on a certain day and complained to him of the tyranny of the wind, saying: "Oh prophet of God! You are that holy and righteous potentate who avenges by the command of God the oppressed and inflicts punishment upon their oppressors, and who, having caused the limpid rivulets of justice to flow into the channels of life's transactions, delivers the tender plants of hearts from the oppressive aridity of tyranny. I am a decrepit woman, stricken by old age and weakness, the dust of hardship and poverty has settled upon the mirror of my feeble heart; I have several little orphans who are entirely depending upon me for their nourishment. Yesterday I had procured some flour, which I was carrying, and which I was to spend for the sustenance of these little children, when all of a sudden the wind began to blow with such violence as to deprive me of it altogether; my orphans are since yesterday sitting in the thicket of hunger and distress. Oh prophet of God I claim justice at your hands against that tyrant." David said: "Old woman! I have no power nor authority over the wind," and ordered a sack of flour to be given to the woman. When she had received the bag and had gone out, she met the Lord Solomon, (upon whom be peace) who advised her to return and to say that she had come to seek redress and not charity. The old woman did so and said: "My Lord! Injustice has been done to me by the wind, my enemy ought to present himself here, that I may get satisfaction." The Lord David ordered two bags of flour to be bestowed upon her. As soon as she had left she again encountered Solomon, who brought her back to the august presence and said: "Dear father, although it is not meet for me thus to obtrude myself, but since the wind cannot act contrary to your commands, it wonld be best to require him to appear in this court, so that both enemies may be confronted, and the quarrel may be judged according to the laws of equity and in conformity with the commands of God. The Lord David ordered the wind to be brought into his presence; this was done, and he arrived in the form of an old man; made his obeisance to

David and kissed the ground of salutation. The old woman began her complaint, the Lord David addressed him: "Oh wind what has induced you thus to injure the unhappy old woman?" The wind answered: "Oh prophet of God, I have it not in my power to transgress the ways of obedience by my own free choice. Several merchants were crossing the river in a skiff which had become leaky and the water having found an entrance they were about to be drowned. They said; these holes may be stopped up with flour, could anybody bring some of it, it is very likely that we would be able to reach the shore in safety." All of them said: "We vow and promise that we will give one half of our property to anybody who will bring us flour." Oh prophet of God! An order was issued to me from the sempiternal throne, to take the flour from this woman and to give it to those merchants; and by means of it they saved their lives." Solomon sent a person to accompany the wind to ask the merchants to perform their vows. They sent one-half of their property, which amounted to an extraordinary high sum, and was delivered to the old woman. Some one said to her: "Every good or ill which we meet with may very often be traced to be the reward for some actions of ours. Upon the wounds of what unhappy person have you placed a plaster, that the doors of the treasury of the blessings of the Almighty have been opened to you and that you have received all these riches?" The old woman said: "I gave yesterday two loaves of bread to a beggar and he made a prayer for me, wishing that God would recompense me with the goods of this world."

The heedless caitiff who gallops on the courser of his evil desires in the stony plains of envy and hatred, and sows the seeds of covetousness in the field of his mind, will drink the poison of reprobation, like that envious Vizier who would not put on the garment of tranquillity and was constantly roaring like a cataract from restlessness and melancholy.

STORY XXIV.

In ancient times there lived a king in Africa of the name of Mulukara, who was much honoured by all; notwithstanding the splendour of the star of his pomp and circumstance he always kept the lamp of godliness burning near him, associated with pious and travelled Durvaishes, and took lessons from them in the laws of wisdom and experience. In the gates and streets of the city he posted servants, whom he instructed to bring into his presence any Durvaishes or pious men that chanced to enter the country. It was his custom to pass the greater part of the day in dispensing justice to gentle and simple, to his soldiers and to his subjects, and to pass the remainder of it in the society of men of knowledge and piety. Once a Durvaish happened to pass through his realm, the stature of accomplishments was adorned with external and internal perfections, and who had quaffed from the bumper of travel by land and by sea the liquor of experience and science. He was introduced to the king, and as he possessed a ready knowledge of the position of every country, and was well acquainted with the customs and manners current in it, the spread-table of his company became so palatable to the king's taste that His Majesty's pleasure increased from day to day to such a degree that his presence at court became almost indispensable. But as the weeds and rubbish of envy and hatred are always the offspring of the garden of royal consideration and favour, so it was also in this case. The king happened to have a Vizier who was unique in his kind for envy and covetousness, and far removed from the ways and habits of humanity and justice, nay an entire stranger to them; so much so that he wished that neither poor nor rich, neither the small nor the great should eat one morsel from the banquet of the king's table; nor that a thousand ants should be allowed to carry away a single grain of

royal bounty or favour. The humane disposition of the king was unpleasing to the invidious wretch and the flame of ill-will of his evil-omened mind having been fanned into a blaze, he ran the charger of his imagination into the hippodrome of stratagems, hurled the dice of falsehood about, seeking for an opportunity how to throw cold water on the amiable occupations of His Majesty, and to remove the Durvaish from his sight. One day the Vizier found the king alone, and intending to avail himself of this favourable opportunity, thus addressed him: "It is a long time since Your Majesty's humble servant has considered it his highest ambition to enjoy your intimacy, and has never for a moment acted contrary to the laws of gratitude; but when those that have been so cherished in royal service, and who observe the duties of fidelity, take notice of events endangering Your Majesty and dignity, they feel compelled to stir. Your most obedient servant has a condign reason to trouble Your Majesty. Having abandoned the affairs of the kingdom, Your Majesty often associates intimately with useless beggars who enjoy no reputation nor honour, and who on account of their evil deeds have strayed from the regions of felicity and perfection; it is a shame and a disgrace to persons of high descent, of dignity, and of power, to soil their pure skirts of prosperity by mixing with the dregs of homeless vagabonds.

VERSES.

Alas! That a royal pearl should not know its own value.
If it fall into jewellers' hands,
Everybody will highly esteem it;
Should it be in a hawker's box,
It will be mistaken for a bead.

It is the duty of Potentates to regulate the affairs of their armies and subjects, and to keep in order the manufactories which pertain either to the maintenance of peace or war." After the king had listened to this, he said: "You who are

expert like Asaf* tell me what neglect has taken place in the administration of affairs either civil or military, so that we may make good any defect, or else what nonsense have you been talking! Those endowed with knowledge and wisdom who are sitting on the carpet of good manners, have compared royal personages with rose-gardens, who are frequented by thousands of persons of all grades, and nothing is lost of their freshness or perfume. Thus all creatures are benefitted by the rays of the world-illuming sun, still its splendour is not diminished. Kings profit in various ways by the society of experienced and travelled men, and become thereby fortified in power, and I have many reasons why I mix with such people." During this conversation the Durvaish made his appearance; the king inquired about his circumstances, and the Vizier made his exit; thinking that it was impossible to deprive the Durvaish of His Majesty's favour; he nevertheless again let fly the bird of envy into the space of intrigues, he drew the sword of hypocrisy over the whetstone of enmity, and spanned the bow of malevolence in hopes that the arrow of falsehood and cunning would strike the target of his desires; till meeting the Durvaish one day, he began to flatter him saying: "Oh thou pillar of the righteous and quintessence of the diligent, although the breeze of your mind pervades the pleasure-garden of royal society and of those who are powerful, nevertheless also the weak and humble like myself hope to attract your attention, because the company of the enlightened bestows happiness upon all hearts.

VERSES.

The society of the wise confers polish to the speculum of the mind,
The splendour of the sun lights the lamp of the moon.

Since abundant blessings and infinite advantages result from attending to the service of the pious, I venture to hope that any day when your attendance at Court is not required, you will condescend to illuminate the poor dwelling of your devoted

* Asaf is supposed by Mohammedans to have been the Prime-minister of Solomon.

servant with the rays of the torch of your noble presence." The Durvaish was overcome by the flattery and smoothness of his antagonist and consented. Shortly afterwards the king having been somewhat indisposed did not leave his Harem the whole day. The Durvaish remembered the promise which he had made to the Vizier, went to him on a visit, and was received with great friendliness. Evening having set in, the guests again dispersed, and the Vizier said: "Since the enjoyment of the company of Durvaishes is one of the indications of prosperity and good luck, and as such happiness does not always fall to our lot, I have been sitting for a long time in the lair of expectation, waiting that such a gift might be transferred from the ledger of destiny to the horoscope of my name; I humbly hope that you will like the full moon condescend to abide in the mansion of your servant." The Durvaish stayed all night, and in the morning the Vizier said: "They have cooked a dish in the house into which they have put a great deal of garlick;" and placing it before the Durvaish continued: "Thou receptacle of sweet converse and chosen vessel of devotion, since it is customary to prepare dishes of this kind during winter time each morning; I brought you some of it, all its ingredients are of lawful substances and no harm will come to you from eating it." The Durvaish gladly accepted it, the Vizier however refused to touch it himself saying: "Since to-day is the 14th day of the month of Showal and His Majesty's birth-day, it is many years that I fast on this day in conformity with a vow and promise which I have made." The Durvaish began to eat, and as the plate was very savoury he consumed a little more than was necessary. On account of the great quantity of garlick which was in it he became uneasy and a little unwell, the Vizier however maintained that garlick had many advantages and salutary properties. After conversing for a while on this subject, the Vizier remarked: "Although garlick is so palatable and profitable to health in many respects, I feel rather astonished that our King greatly dislikes it, and hates every man that smells of it." In the mean time information was brought that His Majesty had come out from his pri-

vate apartments. The Vizier advised the Durvaish to go a little to the bath in order to relieve himself of the smell of garlick, while he was going on an urgent errand to the King. As soon as the Vizier made his appearance, the King asked: "Where is the Durvaish?" The Vizier replied: "Yesterday, and to-day the Durvaish was in my house, he intended to go to the bath, and it is probable that he is there now." The King continued: "It is some time since this Durvaish is in my service, and indeed I have greatly profited by intercourse with him, I feel quite ashamed for not having him presented till now with anything worthy of him." Then turning to the Vizier he continued: "You know that it is in accordance with human nature to expect gifts and to have desires. As I did not reward him for so long a time, did he utter anything like words of complaint about me?" The Vizier stretched out his neck and said quite composedly "well." The King having been made curious by the quietness of the Vizier said: "Tell me the truth." The Vizier, having thus found an opportunity, drove the courser of suspicion into the plain of enmity and self-interest, and writing with the pen of laudation on the page of flattery, began: "It is not hidden from Your exalted Majesty's understanding that troops of such like men are wandering about everywhere, and that with whatever people they might happen to live, they observe their ways and customs as long as they are with them, but as soon as they leave them, they will propagate a thousand erroneous notions about them, in the next place to which they go. These kind of persons have no fixed principles or religion, everything is lawful with them; to associate with them is against the law of God and the prophet, the wise have always avoided and shunned such unhallowed companions and have never placed confidence in them nor entrusted secrets to them." The king replied: "Say at least, what have you heard of him with reference to me." The Vizier remarked: "Since he is well aware of my being a devoted servant of Your Majesty, he dare not say anything disparaging of you." Nevertheless he could not altogether master his tongue but said, that Your Majesty had no fault and that it was the only pity your

breath stank a little, and that he suffered much from this circumstance whenever he sat near Your Majesty. "When the wretch gave vent to such an aspersion I had a great mind to reprove him, but I refrained lest I should give occasion to malignant reports." The king was much astonished at this speech, still he supposed that the Vizier might have uttered it from interested motives. In the mean time the Durvaish made his appearance, and as the bad odour of garlick was still impregnating his mouth, he seated himself in a much lower place than usual; the Vizier went out, and the king was as friendly to the Durvaish as before, still the words of the Vizier weighed upon his mind. He called the Durvaish to approach nearer, when he perceived that he was in a more humble position than usual, the Durvaish however begged his pardon and did not move from his place. Then the King himself arose and went near him; but as the Durvaish had heard from the Vizier that the effluvia of garlick were extremely disagreeable to the King, he retreated gradually backwards lest the odour of it should reach His Majesty, and every time he addressed him, he turned his face in the opposite direction. When the king perceived this, he said to himself: "Apparently the Vizier is quite right; this is the consequence of showing kindness to a mean fool; I must punish him, and that in such a way that nobody shall become aware of it, nor I be accused of being of a changeable disposition and of discarding my favourites, lest any Durvaishes should in future be shy of my society." The King happened to possess a country-house at a distance of two Farasangs from the city where he kept several slaves whom he had commanded that, whenever it should become necessary to kill individuals without the knowledge of anybody, to behead any person or persons coming to them, provided with a small letter in his own handwriting, even if they were his own children. In this way the King caused several malefactors to be executed by them, neither was any living soul aware of the arrangement except himself and these slaves. He intended to get the Durvaish despatched in this manner, and with this intention he said to him: "I know that you must feel melancholy in this

strange country and that you should like to revisit your fatherland; and as I have not hitherto assisted you, I wrote now a bill of exchange for one thousand dinars which I hereby give to you, to defray your expenses on the road. In my country-house you will meet some of my attendants who shall give you ready cash for your paper." The Durvaish took leave from the King and departed, and meeting the Vizier informed him of his dismissal and showed him his bill, telling him at the same time that he was not aware where the country-house was. The Vizier apprehended, that if the Durvaish could not receive the cash he would again return to Court, so he said: "Friend Durvaish I shall give you the money myself if you will leave the bill with me; the Durvaish accordingly delivered the paper received the cash and went his way. As the Vizier was quite ignorant of the arrangement in the country-house, he concluded after a few days' time to make a pleasure excursion to it; he accordingly set out, and having found the place, showed his bill to the servants who immediately surrounded him, drew their swords and cut him to pieces.

VERSES.

The world is a place of retribution,
It is like a mirror, it shows you your image.

It is one of the maxims of the wise that as rust hides the splendour and polish of a mirror, in the same way envy veils and tarnishes all good qualities. This also appears from the following:—

STORY XXV.

Once upon a time there was a merchant in Yemen of the name of Khojah Bashir who was adorned with external and in-

ternal good qualities; he enjoyed the intimacy of the King's society and the star of his good luck was so much in the ascendant with the King's favour that the splendour of the lamps of his presence was constantly illumining the courtly assembly of Royalty, which could never for a moment dispense with it. The king was accustomed to avail himself of his advise in all grave and subtle circumstances and used to reward him with various favours. His Majesty happened however to have a Vizier of an invidious disposition, the merchandize of whose unhappy temper was neither current nor acceptable in the warehouse of humane qualities. This Vizier hated Khojah Bashir on two accounts, firstly because the Khojah was superior to him in ability, and secondly because he was much in the King's intimacy. He thus reasoned with himself: "It is probable that the King may become alienated from me and may confer the Vizierate upon Khojah Bashir. It is everybody's duty to look after his own affairs and to endeavour to remove his enemies; as long as Khojah Bashir continues to drink from the cup of life and dresses in the robe of royal favours, the colour of distress will never become rubbed off from the face of the sun of my quietude; nor will my heart rest in peace for one moment. Therefore I must make the utmost efforts and concoct a plan in consequence whereof Kojah Bashir will not only lose the regards of the king but the latter will either kill, or exile him from this city." The Vizier was day and night meditating on this subject, until on a certain occasion he happened to be privately with the Sultan, made use of his opportunity and said:

VERSES.

"O king of high lineage and great power,
By thy existence the throne's glory is honored. [sphere!
May the flag of thy prosperity and grandeur always adorn the
The very dust of thy court brightens the eye of dignity!

As according to the canons of government and the administration of affairs Viziers are called the keys of the treasury of regulations of business, and the bankers of the good and evil

transactions, of the governments of honored potentates, I venture to trouble Your Majesty about a matter which has taken place in opposition to the customs of obedience." The king said: "Speak." The Vizier continued: "Two things injure the edifice and the dignity of a government: one is to esteem lightly, honorable and respected, and the other is to exalt mean natured and nameless individuals. Every one who seeks the shadow of the Homâi of prosperity and of royalty, must for several reasons keep in mind these two things. Khojah Bashir the merchant, who is placed on the upper seat of Your Majesty's proximity and regard, is a man of low extraction, a criminal, and notorious for his immorality. His wife is an adulteress who has stepped out of the pale of modesty, and hesitates not to be present and to roam in all assemblies and crowds, nor to associate with all sorts of vagabonds and profligate persons; and it is a matter of astonishment that with all your perfections and wisdom Your Majesty has fallen into this heedlessness." As the king had many times tried the character of Kojah Bashir on the touch-stone of examination and experience, and had never discovered a flaw upon the gem of his essence and qualities; he was amazed, and refusing to assent to the insinuations of the Vizier, said: "It is scarcely possible that I should associate with a man of that description; I have found him perfect and the pure gold of his morals void of the dross and alloy of vices, what you say about his character is far from probable, and you must establish your assertion by witnesses and proofs, that I may believe it, or else I shall punish you with the utmost severity." The Vizier regretted and repented of what he had said, but asked the king for one week's respite, and during that time his mind was day and night wandering like a pen over the plain of composition, and meditating by what ruse he might strike the lightning of defamation into the granary of the modesty of Khojah Bashir's wife. In that town there happened to be a deceitful old hag who was skilled in all sorts of cunning tricks; this woman he called and after anointing all the limbs of her expectations with the oil of promises he said to her: "There is an engagement between me and the king, and for that

purpose you must in any way you possibly can, bring to me a sign from Khojah Bashir's wife." The hag said: "By my soul! I shall endeavour my utmost to do you this piece of service." The next day the hog put on an old torn dress like a poor and destitute person; went to the house of Khojah Bashir, as if to beg, and wished to enter; the porter however prohibited her and she said: "O accursed one, hast thou not heard, that.

VERSES.

Whoever impedes the begging of a mendicant,
Is a mean wretch who will go to hell.

What loss will accrue to thee if I go into the prosperous house of the Khojah and the ant of my hope gains a grain of profit from the store-house of his succour?" She again put forth the foot of effort to obtain admission, but the porter placed a staff before her and exclaimed: "The Khojah is in the king's service, and I cannot allow any one to enter without his permission." The old woman hereupon threw herself on the ground, and shouted: "The door-keeper has killed me." She bit and wounded her limbs with her own teeth, besmeared them with blood and lamented: "Alas! My little ones will be orphans!" When the wife of the Khojah heard the clamour of the hog she sent the eunuchs out, and when they arrived they perceived an old woman lying on the ground with all her members wounded and apparently in the agony of death. They asked: "Who art thou, and what has happened to thee?" She replied: "I am a poor weak old woman and have come to the prosperous mansion of the Khojah with the hope of obtaining assistance, but in consequence of my unfounded expectations my life has fallen a prey to the winds of annihilation on account of the beating inflicted upon me by the door-keeper." The eunuchs blamed the porter saying: "Unfortunate man! The removal of misfortunes and the attainment of high degrees are connected with the advent [and relief] of mendicants. Art thou not ashamed for having so unmercifully stricken an old beggar-woman?" The door-keeper swore to the untruthfulness of her assertions, and related the case; the eunuchs bore the news to the Lady of the Khojah who was very

kind-herarted and who said: "Bring the poor creature in by all means, that I may investigate her case, for destitute persons and Durvaishes are the caravan of God's mercy and pity; and to injure them kindles the flame of His ire." The eunuchs wrapped the hog into a carpet and conveyed her into the presence of the spouse of the Khojah, who immediately administered, various perfumes, such as castor, sandal, and aloe, to her nostrils; after a while the old woman opened her eyes and let lose the General of the caravan of deceit (namely her tongue) in praises and good wishes for the Lady of the Khojah; saying: "Noble Madam! May you obtain the approbation of God and may your future circumstances be still more prosperous than your past ones! Had my weak limbs not been strengthened by the balsam of your kindness, the stamina of my life would have been disturbed by the grasp of death in consequence of the ill-treatment experienced by me from the door-keeper, and my little children would have been afflicted by the bitter poison of becoming orphans." Then she began freely to weep and to lament, saying: "O treacherous destiny, thou hast thrown me into the heart-burning flames of the death of my husband Khojah Távus; was it not enough to deprive me of so great a blessing, and to subject me to the trials of poverty and to compel me precariously to look for a maintenance for my children, and to induce me to undertake steps which my slaves would have been ashamed of. O noble lady! I was a woman of honor and reputation, and of a high family; but the reverses of fortune have deprived me of my husband and property, and have driven me away from the mansion of tranquility and comfort. Every day a thousand worthy and destitute persons were supplied from the table of my bounty; one day however I sent a mendicant away empty-handed from my door, and for that reason the torrent of diminution has overthrown the castle of my affluence and has reduced me to this needy condition. The poor are the spies of the palace of monotheism, to give them alms and to treat them well is an occasion of the increase of the vernal garden of the favour of the Most High; but to disappoint them brings on the destruction of the palace of comfort and life.

VERSES.

If thou debarrest a beggar of aid,
Thou wilt enjoy no pleasure.
The prayer of a mendicant,
Will preserve thee from ill-luck.
Give thy offals to the poor,
That thou mayest always prosper.

O respected and noble lady, the great fame of Khojah Bashir's liberal disposition has this day induced me to apply at this place; I eagerly came to obtain a morsel of your bounty, but as such an accident has befallen me, God be praised, what other remedy is there but patience and gratitude?

VERSE.

What use is there to contend with fate?"

By this speech she had so well sown the seeds of weeping and lamentation in the net of incantation and had so dexterously sung the threnody of her sadness and poverty that the unsuspecting bird of the simpleness of the Khojah's spouse was taken in the meshes of her ruse; the lady began spontaneously to weep, to comfort her, to beg her pardon for the injuries she had received, and said: "Wait until the Khojah returns home from the service of the king, and I shall give the gold and silver enough to spend the rest of thy life in comfort, and thou wilt not be in need any more to make demands on any one's liberality. Though thou seest much property here, I am nevertheless unable to dispose of any of it without my husband's permission." The old hag waited till evening, but as no signs of the Khojah's arrival appeared, she said: "Honored lady! The Khojah has not yet come, and my little children who know that I have to-day taken refuge at this threshold, are expecting to participate in his bounty." The wife of the Khojah divested herself of a costly robe which she had on her body, handed it to her, and said:

"This dress is my own property, sell it this evening, and provide for your orphans, until I get something handsome from the Khojah in the morning." The woman took the garment, went immediately to the Vizier's house and said: "I have obtained an evident sign from Khojah Bashir's wife." The Vizier was extremely rejoiced and proceeded that very night to the king, after the Khojah had departed to say his prayers, and showed the dress, saying; "May the spheres always revolve according to the will of Your Majesty, and may the sun of your prosperity shine in the zenith of good fortune. Your humble servant has brought something to prove the guilt of Khojah Bashir's wife, and though she always comes to me; I have, in consideration of my virtue, on account of the favour which I enjoy from Your Majesty, and for the sake of the good will which I bear towards Khojah Bashir, dissuaded her from improprieties, and not admitted her; last night however I have for the purpose of obtaining a proof, sent some one for her; she has been with me till morning, and this is the sign of her presence. Even this evening she came, but I sent her away; let this robe be shown to Khojah Bashir, and if he does not recognize it, I shall find means to give him the particulars." The king was greatly displeased, the Vizier departed, and when Khojah Bashir again returned the king said nothing during that night; the Khojah slept there according to his custom, and when the Belle of morn invested herself with the robe of dawn and seated herself in the edifice of the Orient, the king showed the garment to Khojah Bashir, and addressed him thus: "Last night the police have met a crowd of thieves and have taken this dress from them; wonder whose it may be?" As soon as the Khojah's eye alighted on the garment he recognized it, trembled, lost his colour and exclaimed: "This dress belongs to one of the household of your servant, but as it is sometime since I am in waiting on Your Majesty and have no news about my family, I cannot tell what has happened." The King smiled and said: "You mean wretch are you not ashamed to keep so guilty a woman in your house, who spends every night in the company of another lover! Last night your wife has till morning been in the house

of the Vizier, and this dress has been brought as a proof of it. It is my fault of having admitted such an unprincipled fellow into my society." Khojah Bashir was dumb-founded, but as he had not the least suspicion about his wife's modesty and innocence, he knew that the Vizier had played off some ruse upon the king, whom he was unable to undeceive, and who was so excited that he immediately issued orders for Khojah Bashir's execution; the officers took the latter from the palace and conveyed him to the place where he was to be beheaded. The Khojah had a slave who was so greatly attached to him that he never left him, that boy ran in this emergency to the house and informed his master's wife of what had happened. The Lady said: "There was no harm done, I have given away the dress in charity and for the sake of gaining the favour of the Most High; nor can the promise which He has given with reference to the beneficent, fail in its effects, and He will not allow any ill to befall the Khojah." She gave a purse of gold to the slave and ordered him to surrender it to the executioners to induce them to delay the carrying out of the sentence upon the Khojah; they willingly agreed to do so, because they had received favours from the latter when he was in the service of the king. In the mean time the wife of the Khojah threw a veil over her head and betook herself to the palace of the sovereign, where the Vizier also was, to prevent any interference that might be attempted to rescue the Khojah. The lady however raised a tumult and shouted: "O King! I seek justice from the tyranny and unrighteousness of the Vizier!" The king replied: "What great injustice has the Vizier done to thee? The wife of the Khojah continued: "I am at all times a stipendiary of grandees, and in this way I gain my livelihood; now it is almost fifteen years since I wait upon the Vizier; he promised to give me nine hundred dirhems annually; now however he confides in his high station, and has not given me a single dinar; last night when I asked for what is due to me he wanted to kill me." The Vizier was amazed and on being interrogated by the king he said: "This woman speaks the untruth! I swear by the precious head of Your Majesty, that I have never seen nor know her!"

The lady said: "He made a false oath by the head of his benefactor; let him write down his assertion and if his treachery becomes evident to Your Majesty let him be punished accordingly!" The Vizier arose and scrutinized the face, the stature and height of the lady, and wrote a declaration that he had never seen nor known this woman, and that if his assertion proved untrue he would resign his life and leave his blood to be licked by the dogs of the king. After the Vizier had written and sealed this paper and given it to the king, the lady exclaimed: "Let it not remain unknown to the exalted mind of Your Majesty that I am the wife of Khojah Bashir the merchant, on account of whom this tyrannical and unjust individual has, to satisfy his hatred and envy towards him, concocted this stratagem with reference to me. God the Most High has said, that whoever uses cunning towards another will also be over-reached by cunning." She explained the matter fully and said: "As the Vizier declares that he does not know me, how can I have been his mistress for years?" The king became convinced of the treachery of the Vizier, who was overwhelmed with shame and fell into the agonies of death. The king ordered Khojah Bashir to be immediately brought back from the place of execution, the lady returned to her house; the old hag was produced and examined, but would not make a clean breast of the matter until the instruments of torture were produced, when she spoke as follows:—"As women are of an imperfect understanding I cannot be guilty, I entered the house of the Khojah at the instigation of the Vizier, where that virtuous and modest lady took off the robe from her own body and bestowed it upon me for God's sake; I disregarded her kindness and the greediness of my disposition induced me to transgress the straight path to get the reward promised to me by the Vizier." After obtaining her full explanation, and certainty on the subject, the king caused her and the Vizier to be suspended on the gallows. He approved the prudent demeanor of the wife of Khojah Bashir; begged the pardon of the latter, installed him into the dignity of the Vizier, whose entire property he also bestowed upon him.

STORY XXVI.

The three deceitful Women.

Once upon a time there were three whales of the sea of fraud and deceit, three dragons of the nature of thunder and the quickness of lightning, three defamers of honour and reputation, namely: three men-deceiving lascivious women, each of whom had from the chancery of her cunning, issued the diploma of turmoil to a hundred cities and countries, and in the arts of fraud they accounted Satan as an admiring spectator in the theatre of their stratagems. One of them was sitting in the court of justice of the Kazi's embraces, the second was the precious gem of the Bazaar-master's diadem of compliance, and the third was the beazle and ornament of the signet-ring of the life and soul of the superintendent of police. They were constantly entrapping the fawns of the prairie of deceit, with the grasp of cunning, and plundered the wares of the caravan of tranquillity of hearts of strangers and acquaintances by means of the edge of the scimitar of fraud. One day this trefoil of roguery met at the public-bath, and according to their homogeneous nature they intermingled as intimately as a comb with the hair; they tucked up the garment of amity to the waist of union, entered the tank of agreement, seated themselves in the hot-house of love, and poured from the dish of folly by means of the key of hypocrisy the water of profusion upon the head of intercourse; they rubbed with the brush of familiarity and the soap of affection the stains of jealousies from each other's limbs. After a while, when they had brought the pot of concord to boil by the fire of mutual laudation, they warmed the bath of association with the breeze of kindness and came out. In the dressing-room all three of them happened simultaneously to find a ring the gem of which sur-

passed the imagination of the jeweller of destiny, and the like of which he had never beheld in the store-house of possibility. The finger of covetousness of each of the three women pointed to the ring, and the right of it's possession became the object of dispute among them; but after their controversy had been protracted to an undue length, the mother of the bath-man who had for years practised under the sorcerer Shamsah and had learnt all sorts of tricks from him, stepped forward and said: "I am a woman that has seen the world, and I have experienced many events of this kind; something has occurred to me with reference to this matter, and if you will listen to my advice your difficulty will be solved." The old woman continued: "As I am a faithful and honest person you must entrust the ring to me. Each of you must sow the seed of deception into the field of her husband's folly, and she, the arrow of whose fraud will settle deepest in the target of imbecility of her spouse, and the rose of whose act being watered by the art and care of diligence will flourish more than the plants of her competitors, shall, after due investigation by myself, be put in possession of the much coveted ring." All three of them agreed to this proposal and surrendered the ring to the old hag. The wife of the Kazi said: "I shall be the first who writes the incantation upon the name of the Kazi." Accordingly they dressed in the robe of cunning, put on the mantle of deception, and departed to their respective domiciles. In the first place the wife of the Kazi sat down in the court of meditation and arrangement, and having for the purpose of solving this problem opened the Directory of falsehood, she perused it with great diligence, scanning it from paragraph to paragraph, from the preface to the conclusion. A carpenter of an amorous and acute disposition happened to be the Kazi's neighbour, he had for a long time paid attentions to the wife of the latter, he chopped the tablet of his heart with the axe of uneasiness, and scratched the board of his body with the plane of lamentation, he was in constant motion like a saw, and though all his limbs were like a grating turned into eyes, and he was sitting on the chair of expectation he was not able to attain

his object, so that the hatchet of longing and burning felled the palm-tree of his patience and equanimity, and his heart was perforated by the anger of this grief. As the wife of the Kazi was aware of the sufferings of the carpenter she called her confidential slave-girl and said to her: "O thou Violet of the garden of harmony the flower of whose body I cherish since so long a time in the parterre of education! I have a little business which I mean to absolve this day by the aid of thy intimacy; if thou wilt accomplish it cheerfully, I shall ransom thee with my own money, and rejoice thy heart with various gifts." The girl replied: "Whatever my mistress orders, is my duty to perform." The wife of the Kazi said: "Go unobserved by any one to the carpenter and tell him, that the flame of his love has taken effects upon my heart, that I am aware of his having suffered torments on account of my unkindness, and that on the day of resurrection I shall have to answer for the sufferings I caused to him; I am quite embarrassed on this subject, and in order to remove this awful responsibility I am prepared now to make good my past transgressions and to meet him if he will dig a subterraneous passage between this house and his dwelling, that we may be enabled to pluck the roses of mutual love whenever we choose, and communicate freely by means of this mine." The maid went to the carpenter and caused by the nectar of her eloquence this message to bloom in the carpenter's garden of hope; he presented the girl with one thousand dinars and said:

VERSES.

"I would ransom thee with my life, O idol of the garden of purity!
I shall gird my loins for thy service, in a hundred thousand places.

It is a life-time since I am burning on the thread of the exclusion and separation, and am putting the collyrium of longing into the eye of desire to behold that paragon of the world.

VERSES.

Melancholy for thee inspires my breast,
Desire for thee permeates my heart.
Thy behests I shall never disobey,
Thy will I shall follow with my soul."

The carpenter dug a spacious passage between the two houses and the lady arrived by means of it in her lover's domicile. When the carpenter beheld the Jacob's house of mourning of his heart illuminated by the Joseph's lamp of the coveted interview, he sad:

VERSES.

Welcome my faithful idol,
My hut is the envy of paradise.
Come moon-like mistress come,
Come tender sweet-heart come.
Thy elegant speech is coquetry,
Thy gate is graceful like the rose.
Thou art the cynosure of love,
Thou art the model of tenderness."

After reciprocal congratulations and compliments that title-page of the ledger of amorous intrigues said to the carpenter: "To-morrow I shall come here and you must bring the Kazi to marry me to you." When she had explained the particulars of this matter to the carpenter he drew the hand of obedience over the eyes of compliance, and when on the next day the Kazi of morn placed the seal of brilliancy on the volume of the firmament, and the Sheikh-sun seated himself upon the carpet of the Orient and manifested himself by the consequences of light and brightness; the Kazi hastened from his Harem to the court of justice, the tender mistress however betook herself to the house of the carpenter, who forgot the grief of separation, dressed himself in gaudy clothes, waited on the Kazi and said: "O spreader of the superfices of the law, and strengthener of the pillars of the affairs of mankind:

DISTICH

No matter in this world can be arranged without thy intervention."

When the Kazi perceived from this allocution that the carpenter came on business, and concluded that it might be something profitable, he replied: "Greeting to you! And may the

mercy of God be upon your fathers and ancestors, fortunate and blessed man! Welcome! Rest yourself a while, smoke tobacco and drink coffee, whilst you are acquainting me with your intention." The carpenter said: "O Kazi! I am a bride-groom and am very restless to-day on that account; my bride is sitting in the house. As the moon is this day in the first mansion of the Balance; and in the two hours and nine minutes that are elapsing of the day, it has a triangular aspect with the sun, a hexagonal one with Jupiter, is in opposition to Mercury out of the influence of the scorpion and the remaining ill-boding influences, therefore I am of good cheer, and as the hour to tie the matrimonial knot, is quite propitious, I request your lordship quickly to perform the ceremony." As soon as the Kazi heard about a wedding, he put the turban of covetousness on his head, took the rosary of thanksgivings into his hand, and went with the carpenter to the house of the latter; when he entered he exclaimed: "Open, O opener of portals!" But when his eye alighted on the bride, he recognized in her the mistress of his own Harem, a thousand suspicions beset him, he nevertheless composed himself as well as he was able, but said to himself. "This is a very wonderful business, and I have never seen two persons resembling each other so much." Whilst he thus plunged the pen of his mind into the inkstand of meditation and amazement, the carpenter exclaimed: "My Lord! The time is passing, and what is the use of delaying!" The Kazi looked up and again scrutinized the female but found no difference between her and his own wife, so he exclaimed: "Praise be to God! There is no power nor strength but by His will!" He put his hand to his breast and said: "What memory is this!" And arose from his place. The carpenter said: "O Kazi are you going?" The Kazi replied: "My good fellow my 'key of prosperity' has been left in the house, and there is a prayer in it that must be recited before pronouncing the matrimonial formula, to procure mutual enjoyment for the newly married couple." Accordingly he went to the house but was forestalled by his spouse who entered it through the passage and laid down on her bed. When the Kazi arrived

he saw his wife in this position and said: "I ask pardon from God from all that displeases Him in words, deeds, thoughts or intentions. To what a strange suspicion have I given way! May God forgive me!" When the woman heard these exclamations she yawned and turned from one side to the other, saying: "Violet! Did not I tell you not to allow any one to enter this room that I might repose for a while." The Kazi replied: "Beloved partner! There is no stranger, excuse me, and pardon me for having harboured evil suspicions concerning thee." The wife said: "Perhaps you have turned mad?" The Kazi again returned to the carpenter's house but his spouse had preceded him and was sitting in her place. As soon as he looked at her the same suspicions overwhelmed him and he exclaimed in amazement: "O Lord of glory! I have fallen into a strange predicament, and am as it were between two screws of the two horns of a dilemma, that presses me on the one hand quickly to perform the ceremony, and on the other, rather to procrastinate it." The carpenter said: "My Lord Kazi! I see you despondent and hesitating in this business; and although you ought not to expect anything from me because I am your neighbour, I nevertheless give you these thousand dinars to hasten your proceedings, because the time is elapsing." When the Kazi beheld the thousand dinars he put them in his pocket and began: "In the name of God the merciful the clement," and continued to read the matrimonial formula till he arrived at the words: "I marry" then he perceived a black-mole on the corner of his wife's lip which he had so often kissed before. He felt uneasy and the sugar of the thousand dinars was bitter in the palate of his greediness, he again lowered his head into the collar of meditation and said: "O assembly of genii and men, are you able to withdraw yourselves from the precincts of heaven and earth?" The carpenter exclaimed: "O Kazi! I really do not know the reason of your delay, nor from the fountain of what pretence the water of this procrastination is gushing!" The Kazi smiled and said: "O carpenter! We are the sureties of legal affairs, the successors of the prophets, and the pontiffs of the laws and canons of the ways of guidance.

In every affair that we perform we must attentively consider a thousand subtleties, lest we might become liable to blame in the next world by the commission of a fault. Why are you in such haste, all affairs in this world succeed only by civility and patience, and not by confusion and impatience. Thou resemblest that shepherd who was one day engaged in pasturing his flock, and became very thirsty; as a village was very near he left his sheep and entered it to look for water; he happened to pass near a tree under the shadow of which a school-master was teaching a crowd of boys; after looking for a while he perceived the former reposing and issuing orders, and the latter humbly obeying him in all things, and occupied in melodiously rehearsing their lessons. This sort of employment disgusted the shepherd with his own calling and he said: "Whilst I am able to learn this trade, I do not see why I should spend my whole life to no profit by running about the fields with a lot of sheep; I must exchange the profession of a shepherd for that of a school-master, and then I shall spend my days in perfect comfort like this man." Accordingly he stepped forward and said: "My good master! I have a great inclination to learn your business; please instruct me in it." When the teacher looked at the figure and aspect of the shepherd, he was astonished and saw him to be an ignorant fellow who had no capacity; for the sake of fun however he took a piece of paper, wrote the A B C on it and said: "Take a seat and read." The shepherd said: "Why do you not teach me from those large books?" The master replied: "You are a beginner now, and these cannot read books until they learn the alphabet." The shepherd continued: "Master! What letters are you speaking about? Please fill me with them now, for my flock roams about without a shepherd, and I have no time to sit down and to learn the A, B, C." The School-master smiled and drove the shepherd away. O carpenter! Do not fancy every business to be easy. Now I meditate and study how to divide the possessions of a certain wealthy man, who has died yesterday, among thirty-two men who have inherited them; this has just occurred to my

mind, and I was engaged in multiplication and divison." Then the Kazi again glanced at the woman, began to get uneasy and arose. The carpenter said: "O Kazi! What fancy is moving you now, and I see you so confused to-day?" The Kazi replied: "This transaction is one of the greatest importance according to the religious Law, it cannot be performed unless after the sacred ablution, about the completeness of which a doubt has just arisen in my mind, therefore I must return to my house and renew it." The carpenter answered: "You can wash yourself here." The Kazi exclaimed: "No by God'! I never perform my ablutions with water which I have not seen before, I have all the arrangements for purification in my house." Accordingly he returned to his house but his wife went before him through the passage, sat down and was reading in a book when the Kazi came in and said: "I ask forgiveness from God, and I repent of all my sins and transgressions." The lady looked astonished at the Kazi and said: "This day I perceive the neck of your intellect confined in the halter of a lunatic fit; how many times have you come and have again gone away after holding a soliloquy as madmen are accustomed to do. If you have become subject to such a distemper and do not take the proper steps to cure it, I shall not be your nurse." The Kazi said: "O Balqys* of the compact of prudence and innocence, to-day I have indulged in a suspicion with reference to thee; I have made a mistake, forgive me!" The wife replied: "The worst people of the world are those who indulge in evil imputations; and these must be expiated." Accordingly she gave a few dinars to Violet and enjoined her to distribute them among the poor as a penitential expiation. The Kazi took out an apple from his pocket, cut it in twain, and gave one moiety to his wife, saying: "Though apples have many qualities, the chief of them is to increase conjugal love, I intend to-night to go to the bath." The Kazi kept the other half of the apple and went with it to the house of the carpenter; his wife

* Name of the famous queen of Seba who visited Solomon.

preceded him as usual and sat down in her place, when he approached her he beheld the moiety of an apple in her hand; he was greatly amazed but said nothing for fear of offending the carpenter; and the latter exclaimed: "O Kazi! Tell me for God's sake what you have to say, or else why is this going hither and thither and all this procrastination? If this matter is disagreeable to you I shall bring Sheikh Juhtás or Mulla Allem-Ulhuda the servant of the college to perform the matrimonial ceremony. O Kazi I expected more kindness from you as a neighbour, this business is not worth so much haggling for, if you wish more than a thousand, take these five hundred dinars." When the Kazi saw the five hundred dinars he was over-powered by covetousness and exclaimed: "Let happen what will!" And shutting his eyes he continued: "I take refuge with God from the lapidated Satan: I marry and couple!" Then his eye again alighted on the countenance of his wife, and saw the ruby neck-lace which he had bought for three thousand dinars; he shook his head and said: "Every now and then, I must unconsciously stop, I do not know what is again distracting my attention," and he glanced every moment at his wife. The carpenter exclaimed: "O Kazi your amorous looks have convinced me, that your desires are centered on the possession of this woman, because your eyes unceasingly wander about her countenance; if this be the case, do not make a secret of it that we may consult her opinion on the matter." The Kazi thought with himself, that as the carpenter was an ignorant and illiterate man, he might play a trick on him and recite something else instead of the matrimonial formula, so that if his suspicions turned out true, he might annul the marriage; accordingly he sat down on his haunches and recited: "Iazghára Iajargára Aftanys Salanqá Dáma Talkuvára, &c." Then he spoke to the carpenter: "Say: 'I agree!'" But as the carpenter had repeatedly heard the matrimonial formula before, he answered: "Kazi! This is a formula read to country-fellows and retainers, I have given the one thousand five hundred dinars to marry me like grandees; I am not a child to be thus played with, this formula is not worth more than twenty dinars; either return me my

money or recite the proper manly formula." The Kazi replied: "Carpenter you are but a working man, why do you entertain such high pretensions; I have just now read for you the formula which I made use of in marrying Mulla Abdullah the householder in the market; you want another formula used for grandees, scholars and judges, and to give me the head-ache." The carpenter replied: "I also covet science and distinction." The Kazi rejoined: "How will you convince me of that." The carpenter continued: "I know the story of the 'Sun and Moon,' I have heard the tale of 'Saifulmulook and Badiaă Aljumal' also; I have likewise seen 'the road to the mosk;' my father used to pass once every day near the school-house of Mulla Namatullah Kylak." The Kazi said: "There is no science nor perfection higher than this, I did not know the degree or limit which thou hast attained." In consequence of the irony of the Kazi, the carpenter put a feather in his bonnet and said: "There is no excuse." The Kazi attempted to begin the formula, but when he looked at the half of the apple that was in the hand of the lady, he said: "Woman! Give me this apple." She complied, the Kazi took out the other half from his pocket, and by placing the two halves against each other he found them to fit exactly." The carpenter exclaimed: "Kazi! Apparently some jugglery is going on here, what cunctation are you subject to, at every moment!" The Kazi replied: "I have done this to produce conjugal love between you." Then he again arose and wanted to go to his house for the purpose of verifying his surmises; but the woman turned to the carpenter and said: "Foolish man! Hast thou brought me here to marry or to make a laughing-stock of me? I have never seen such proceedings, I think his eyes have become subject to [the disease called] pearl-water." The Kazi took no notice of these words but hastened to his house, where his wife met him with the words: "O Kazi thou resemblest those people who have the pearl-water in their eyes." The Kazi replied: "There is no God but God! The other woman has spoken the same thing; tell me at any rate what distemper the pearl-water is." His wife replied: "Pearl-water is a humor arising from heavy

particles in the stomach, rising into the head, and from thence descending into the eye-lids, which injures the eyes, so that different persons appear to be the same, and cannot be distinguished from each other ; if this malady is not cured it degenerates into cecity." The Kazi replied : "Perhaps this is because I have not kept my depraved appetite in subjection. Several days ago I was with the Superintendent of the Police of the town in the house of Kávas the Armenian who had died ; we went there to take an inventory of his goods and chattels for the Ameer ; the children of Khojah Kávas had by way of a sweet-meat baked something with hog's blood ; as as I was hungry and this food happened to be delicious, I eat somewhat freely of it, and as it had been prepared from the property of the deceased man, it may possibly have had its consequences." He again returned to the carpenter's house and when he beheld his wife, he stole glances from her, she became however angry and said to the carpenter: "This fellow, is every now and then casting amorous glances at me, and through my connection with thee I have lost my reputation ; either drive him away or renounce my company." The Kazi said: "Respected virgin and honourable lady, in all matters consideration is useful, because the Turks have said: "Artig chárig yarturiashy beleh tos." The carpenter lost his patience and exclaimed : "You have nearly killed me with your folly and loquacity, I do not wish any longer for marriage, if thou hast considered this woman worthy of thy Harem why hast thou for so long a time been undecided ?" Whilst the carpenter was thus talking they heard the voice of the Muezzin, and he exclaimed : "Alas ! It is noon, the propitious hour has elapsed !" The Kazi said : "You are a carpenter, you know how to handle the saw and the axe, to make windows and doors, what idea have you about the rotation of the spheres, about good and bad stars and hours ? This science belongs to our profession. Accordingly he pulled out an almanack from his pocket and said : "The moon is a luminary of quick motion, yesterday it has entered the sign of the Balance, but has so quickly travelled through the degrees that it feels

tired to-day and is still reposing, nor will it travel to-morrow. From to-day till to-morrow wedding-dinners and all sorts of other banquets are propitious ; now I shall go to my house and prepare a medicine for the pearl-water of my eyes ; because it will very probably hinder me from studying." The carpenter however took hold of one side of the Kazi and the woman of the other and said : "Perhaps the affairs of this world are only a play. By God! We shall not let thee go ere thou tiest the matrimonial knot." The Kazi rejoined : "Let me go, or else I shall immediately write a mandate for the capital punishment of both of you." They said : "May the columns of the house of Khojah Ratyl the merchant fall upon you, if you do us the least harm." The Kazi turned his face towords heaven and said : "O Judge of the court of justice of destiny! Protect me from the evil of all mad persons and from all malefactors, and grant me health and peace! Thou judgest, thou art the sovereign judge!" The Kazi had no other remedy but to marry the woman to the carpenter ; and as at that time it was customary for the bride to kiss the hand of the Kazi after the termination of the ceremony, the woman stepped forward to do so; the Kazi however was so anxious to have a new mark by which to confront his wife, that he struck her a blow with his fist on the jaws so that they bled profusely. Then he immediately ran to his own house where he was met by his wife disfiguring her own face, scratching it, and exclaiming : "I renounce to such an adulterous husband, who is carrying on intrigues with the carpenter's wife." The woman and her maidens took the Kazi by the throat, pulled off his turban, and he fled to the street. The carpenter who had heard the noise, came out, and seeing him with the head uncovered, placed his own turban upon it, and said : "O Kazi! Women are of an imperfect understanding, and quarrels between husbands and wives have taken place at all times. If you have lost your senses this can easily be remedied by taking up your lodging for a few days in the mad-house, until your spouse repents of her deed." Accordingly the Kazi went to repose himself in the lunatic asylum.

The secret-knowing philomel of the musical-hall of narratives, namely the pen, thus continues its melody: After the wife of the Kazi had severed the robe of his conjugal authority with the scissors of deceit, she again stitched it with the needle of fraud, and invested with it the bosom of the Kazi's breast of imbecility by means of the above narrated tricks. Then she sent word to her two accomplices, that she had drawn the bow of machination to its utmost extent by the exertion of her skill, that she had with the arrow thereof hit the target of the conditions stipulated, and that now the field was free to them for the display of their cunning.

The blandly ambling pea-fowl of the pen continues the narrative as follows:—Now it was the turn of the Bazaar-master's wife whose tricks were of a kind to instruct Eblis in the laws of deceit and fraud; she began to weigh all kinds of stratagems in the balance of meditation to enable her to decide what course of roguery would be best for her to adopt. She happened to have a nurse who had likewise attained the highest degree of intrigue by the instigations of Eblis and was her assistant in all her devices; she called this woman, and anointing with the balsam of flattery the limbs of her attachment, said: "O beloved and kind mother! The ornaments and pictures of my house of fraud and cunning are the offspring of thy instructions; it is a long time since the bond of amity has become torn between me and my husband, in spite of all my endeavours I am unable to cope with his sagacity, but I trust in thy affection, and hope that we will be able to arrange this matter by thy assistance." The nurse replied: "Ornament of the tribe of the lovely:

VERSES.

My soul is longing and my eyes waiting,
Both to be sacrificed at thy behest.

As long as the child of the spirit remains in the cradle of my body, and the milk of motion and rest circulates in the members of it, I cannot avoid obeying thy commands.

VERSE.

I sincerely comply with all thy orders."

The spouse of the Bazaar-master continued: "As I was one day coming from the bath, the son of a banker was walking in that lane; when the smoke of the torch of my tenderness reached his nostrils, he fell from the courser of the intellect upon the ground of insensibility, and followed me everywhere with groans and sighs, but the vanity of seeing myself beloved allowed me not to sprinkle the rose-water of a glance upon the face of his expectation. When he arrived at the door of my house he sobbed and returned. I know that the bird of his heart is captivated by the pursuit after the grain of this phantom, and is imprisoned in the meshes of exclusion. I want thee to go to him, and to convey to him the following message: "From that day when the chamberlain of carelessness hindered me to admit thee to the intimacy of an interview, I dream every night fearful dreams, and am to this day at all times so much plunged into the drowning waters of uneasiness, that it has become plain to me that all this is the consequence of thy disappointment and exclusion; now I wish to remedy my uncivility by promenading a little in the gardens of thy love and attachment. As the Bazaar-master will be engaged till the morning in some business, the house will be unencumbered by his presence. Put on a woman's veil, bring wine and the requisites for amusement and come, that we may sweeten our palates with the honey of meeting each other."

After the lady had despatched her nurse to the banker's son, the Bazaar-master arrived, and his spouse spoke to him as follows:— "Beloved husband! To-morrow one of the principal ladies of the town whose acquaintance I have made in the bath, will come to me on a visit; as it is my interest to receive her with all possible civility, you must remain in the Town-hall to-morrow till evening, send in the supplies required for a handsome entertainment, and please to arrange everything in such a manner that we do not reap shame in anything." The Bazaar-master

lighted the lamp of acquiescence in the assembly of compliance and said: "Let it be so."

When the banker of morn sat down in the shop of the horizon, and the unalloyed gold of the sun stamped in the mint of creation with the legend of brilliancy and light began to ascend towards the meridian of the sphere, the son of the banker put on costly garments, perfumed himself, threw over himself a large evil and taking under it a flask of ruby-colored wine, proceeded with a thousand joyful expectations to the mansion of his mistress, who had like the crescent-moon on a festive eve gone to meet him with open arms as far as the vestibule of the house, saying.

VERSES.

To-day my moon visits me with joy,
And renews the covenant of love with his light.

Thou art welcome! For the rays of thy sun-like countenance have made my humble cottage the object of jealousy of the palaces of Europe, and delightful like paradise.

VERSES.

Come! For without thee I cannot endure life,
The eye-lids of my repose meet not sleep without thee.
I wish not for the water of immortality through Khudzur,
Thy cheeks are not less to me than immortality.

She took him into the interior apartments, divested him of the veil, threw the hand of amity over the neck of his affection, begged his pardon for her past offence, entangled with kindness the feet of his heart in the stirrup-leathers of hope, entirely undressed him and said: "Rest thyself comfortably in this secret apartment until I go and bring the requisites for company and music, then we shall enjoy ourselves." She went out and said to her female attendants: "When I again go in, you must call the Bazaar-master into the house, and say: "Our lady has brought a strange man, is amusing herself with him and

drinking wine." Then the spouse of the Bazaar-master again went to the young man and kept him company, in the mean time the maidens had informed her husband of what was going on; he became greatly excited and sent in a servant to inquire. The lady was perplexed and said to the youth: "The coming of the Bazaar-master at this time is not without a cause, perhaps he has a notion of what we are doing." The youth likewise began to tremble over his whole body from terror and said: Alas! I shall lose my life in this business. For God's sake assist me in this matter, for the Bazar-master is jealous, and will injure me." The lady opened a chest and said: "Conceal yourself in this box until I see what will come of this affair." Accordingly she locked up the young man in the cup-board, collected his clothes, and met her husband who was inflamed like an oven; she quickly threw her hands around his neck and said: "Darling of my soul! I see thee greatly discomposed and confused; what is it?" He replied: "My reason is unwilling to put faith in what I have heard, and I want you to tell me the truth." The wife smiled and said: "What thou hast heard is quite true. The lamp of my heart was for a long time blazing in the assembly of love towards a young man; the palm-tree of his imagination likewise bore the fruit of attachment to me, and now I have brought him and am in his company. Love is innate in human nature but has never manifested itself between me and thee. Hast thou not heard of Leila and Majnooon, nor read the story of Yusuf and Zuleikha? Is there any one in the world who has not felt the pangs of love? He in the mother-shell of whose heart affection finds no refuge, has indeed reaped no fruit from the spring of life.

VERSES.

Love is the ornament of the rose-grove of the heart,
It is the guide and leader to each mansion.
The breast is a lamp whose flame is love,
The heart is a shell, and love the pearl in it.
The lamp without a flame is the grave,
Without a pearl the shell has no light.

Love is the fruit of the tree of life,
Love is the gem of the crown of attractions.
Without love the soul is shrunk up,
Who is not loving is like dying.

O Bazaar-master, there is no man nor woman who has not tasted the pleasures of this passion, it is inherent in life, and its exhilarating breezes invigorate the rose-garden of politeness. There is no animate being whose nostrils have not been perfumed by the fragrance of the garden of love, perhaps I have no heart and am no human being? How long shall I dwell with thee? In all circumstances a change of climate will become necessary. It is a long time since my unfortunate friend has been prostrated on the bed of sickness for the love which he bears to me, and on account of his exclusion. Humanity and compassion are the chief corner-stones of Islam, and what shall I answer on the day of resurrection if I do not act in compliance with these two duties? Hast thou not heard that a mendicant must not be sent away unrelieved, and that if an ant creeps away with one grain the stores of the bars will not be diminished.

VERSES.

No harm befalls the granary,
If a poor ant obtains half a grain.

A hundred thousand persons drink water from one fountain, and several people eat fruit from one date-tree. What deficiency will be entailed upon the rose grove of my tenderness, if the odour of a rose brings tranquillity to the nostrils of an unforunate man? Quench the thirst of a sitient man with a drop of water, and rescue a fainting one from the labyrinth of distress; because good acts are a dam to misfortunes. Be not melancholy O Bazaar-master, for in the banquet of my existence the plates of my tender delicacies are so numerous that a thousand persons like thyself may be satisfied by them for many years." The Bazaar-master said with astonishment: "Worthless, foolish and vain person, what senseless words are you saying?" The wife replied:

"I swear by the gratitude due for thy affection and friendship, that everything I said was only fun and dissimulation; but if you have any doubts on the subject, come and see with your own eyes." Accordingly she led the way and her husband followed her until he reached the door of the house. When the Bazaar-master beheld the clothes, the arrangements for drinking and the decorations, he began to blaze up like a flame, and to ferment like a tub of wine; in fact he was quite beside himself and asked: "Where is the young man!" She replied: "He is in the chest, I have concealed him in it; if you do not believe it take the key, open and see." The Bazaar-master took the key, the lady burst into laughter, clapped her hands together and exclaimed: "I remember but you forget!" Her husband threw away the keys and said: "Miserable woman, you have destroyed my patience; was it worth the while thus to trifle with my affection?" With these words he left the house, but while the conversation lasted the young man was, as if suspended between death and life. When it was evening the woman opened the cupboard and said to him: "Leave the place quickly, and remove the spectacle of this intention from your eyes; for you were near being invested with the robe of a lover." The young man thanked God for having preserved his life, and fled precipitately.

After the bird of the Bazaar-master's wife had laid this egg in the nest of deceit, she informed the spouse of the superintendent of police, that she had likewise spread her net and had captured the coveted game, and that now the field being free, she was prepared to see what fruit the tree of her friend's accomplishments would bear.

The narrator of this tale causes the rose-bud of his rhetoric to bud from the dew of composition as follows:—

When the wife of the superintendent of police was apprized that her turn had come, she revolved and meditated for some time what trick she was to play off upon her lord, and after having come to a conclusion she said one evening to her husband:—"To-morrow I wish that we should both enjoy ourselves

at home without interruptions, and I mean to prepare some cakes." The gentleman replied: "Very well my dear! I also longed for such an occasion." The lady had a servant who was very obedient and always covered with the mantle of attachment to her. The next morning she called this boy and said to him: "It is a long time since I contemplate the hyacinth grove of thy symmetrical stature; I know that thou travellest constantly and faithfully on the road of compliance with all my wishes, and that thou seekest to serve me. I have a little business which I wish thee to do for me." The servant replied: "I shall be happy to comply." The Lady gave him one thousand dinars and said: "Go to the convent which is in our vicinity; there will be Kalandars* in it, give these thousand dinars to one of them and say: "A prisoner whom the Amyr had surrendered to the police, has escaped last night, he resembles thee greatly, and as the superintendent of the police is unable to give an account to the Amyr, he has sent a man to take thee instead of the escaped criminal. I have compassion for thee and mean to rescue thee; take this sum of money, give me thy dress, and flee from this town; for if thou remainest in it till morning thou wilt be subjected to torture and wilt have to lose thy life."

The servant acted as he was bid, brought the garments and handed them to his mistress. When it was morning the spouse of the superintendent of police said to her husband: "I know that you wished to eat sweet-meats for a long time and if you will allow me, I shall make some to-day." The superintendent answered: "Very well!" His wife made all her preparations and commenced to bake the sweet-meats. The gentleman said: "Last night a theft was committed in a certain place and I sat up late, to extort confessions; and as I have spent a sleepless night, I feel tired and wish to repose a little." The lady replied: "Very well!" Accordingly the superintendent of the police reclined on the pillow of rest, and when the sweet-meat was ready his wife took a little and after

* *Kalandar* is a kind of monk among the Mahommedans, who shaves his head and beard, and abandons all possessions.

putting an opiate into it she handed it to her husband and said: "How long will you sleep? To-day is a day of feasting and pleasure, not of sleep and laziness. Lift up your head and see whether I have made the sweets according to your taste or not?" The gentleman raised his head, swallowed a piece of the hot cake and again relapsed to his bed; the morsel was still in his throat when consciousness left, and a deep sleep overwhelmed him. His wife immediately undressed him, and put on him the garments of the Kalandar; the servant shaved his beard and made some tatoo marks on his body. When the night set in the lady called her servant and said: "Hyacinth! Be kind enough to take the superintendent on thy back, and carry him to the convent instead of that Kalandar, and if he wishes to return to the house in the morning, do not let him." Hyacinth obeyed, and towards dawn the superintendent recovered his senses a little; but as the opiate had made his palate very bitter, he became extremely thirsty. He fancied that he was in his own house, therefore he exclaimed: "Narcissus! Bring water!" The other Kalandars awoke from sleep, and after hearing several shouts of this kind, they fancied that the crapula from Bhang* had taken effect upon him, and said: "Poor fellow! The Narcissus is in the garden, this is the convent of sufferers, and there are green garments enough here. Arise and sober thyself, for the morning and harbinger of benefits as well as of the acquisition of the victuals for subsistence is approaching." When the superintendent heard these words he thought that they were a dream, because he had not yet fully recovered his senses. He sat quietly, but was amazed on beholding the vaults and ceiling of the convent; he got up, looked at the clothes in which he was dressed and at the marks tatooed on his body, he began to doubt whether he was awake or asleep; he washed his face and perceived that the caravan of his mustachios had likewise departed from the plain of his countenance; in this state of perplexity he went out of the monastery and proceeded to his house; there his wife with her male and

* *Bhang* an inebriating draught made of hemp leaves, hemlock, henbane, opium or masloc.

female servants had prepared their threats and were expecting his arrival. The superintendent approached the house and placed his hand on the knocker of the door, but was received by Hyacinth who said: "Kalandar! Whom seekest thou?" The superintendent rejoined: "I want to enter the house." Hyacinth continued: "Thou hast to-day evidently taken thy morning drought of Bhang earlier and more copiously than usual, since thou hast foolishly mistaken the road to the convent. Depart! This is not the place in which vagabond Kalandars are harboured. This is the palace of the superintendent of the police, and if the Symurg* looks with uncivility from the fastness of the West of mount Qâf at this place, the wings of its impertinence will at once become singed." The superintendent said: "What nonsense art thou speaking, go out of my way, for I do not relish thy imbecile prattle;" but when he wanted to enter, Hyacinth struck him with a bludgeon on the shoulder; this the superintendent returned with a box on the ear, and both began to wrestle with each other; at that moment the lady and her maid-servants rushed forth from the rear and assailed the superintendent with sticks and stones, shouting: "This Kalandar wishes in plain day-light to force his way into the house of the superintendent. What a pity that the superintendent is sick or else this crime would have to be expiated on the gallows! In the mean time all the neighbours assembled, and on seeing the shameless Kalandar's proceedings they said: "Look at that impudent Kalandar who wants forcibly to enter the house of the superintendent." Ultimately the crowd amounted to more than five-hundred persons, the gentleman was put to flight and pursued by all the little boys who pelted him with stones till they expelled him from the town.

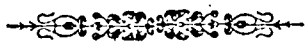
At a distance of three Farsangs from the town there was a village, where the superintendent concealed himself in the corner of a mosk; during the evenings he went from house to house and begged for food to sustain life, until his mustachio again grew and the tatooed scars gradually began to disappear.

* A fabulous bird, literally *thirty-fowls*.

Whenever any one inquired for the superintendent at his house, he was informed by the servants, that the gentleman was sick. After one month had expired, the grief of separation and the misery of his condition had again driven the superintendent back to the city; he went to the monastery because fear hindered him from going to the house. His wife happened one day to catch a glimpse of him from her windows, and perceived him sitting in the same dress with a company of Kalandars; she felt compassion for him, called the servant and said: "The superintendent has had enough of this!" She made a loaf of bread and put some opiate into it, and said: "When the Kalandars are asleep, you must go and place this loaf under the pillow of the superintendent." The servant obeyed, and when the gentleman awoke in the middle of the night he was surprised to find the loaf; he fancied that whon his companions had during the night returned from begging, they had placed it there, accordingly he eat some of it. During the same night the servant went there by the command of the lady, took his master on his back and carried him home. When it was morning the lady took off the Kalandar's clothes from her husband and dressed him in his own garments, and began to bake sweetmeats as on the former occasion. After some time the gentleman began to move, and his wife exclaimed: "O superintendent, do not sleep so much; I have told you that we shall spend this day in joy and pleasure, it was not fair of you to pass the time in this lazy way. Lift up your head and see what beautiful sweet-meats I have baked for you." When the superintendent opened his eyes, and saw himself dressed in his own clothes and at home, the rose-bush of his amazement again brought forth the flowers of astonishment, and he said: "God be praised! What has happened to me." He sat up, and exclaimed: "Wife! Things have happened to me which I can scarcely describe." His spouse replied: "From the uneasy motions which you have made in your sleep it appears that you must have had extraordinary dreams." The superintendent replied: "Dreams forsooth! Since the moment I laid down I have experienced the most strange adventures."

The spouse rejoined: "Certainly! Last night you have been eating food disagreeing with your constitution, and to-day the vapours of it have ascended into your brains, and have caused you all this distress." The superintendent said: "Yes! Last night we went to a party in the house of Serjeant Bahman, there was a roasted Pillow,* of which I eat somewhat more than usual, and to-day the vapour of it has occasioned me all this trouble.

In fine, when those three champions of the lists of deceit had executed their stratagems, they went according to the agreement previously entered into, again to the same bath, in order to state their cases to the old hag who had promised to award the ring to the most cunning one of the three ladies, but to their greatest surprise they were informed that she had departed to another country, had outwitted them all, and had kept the coveted ring for herself.



STORY XXVII.

The cunning owl and the simple falcon.

The honey-lotuses of the Zenith of rhetorics who capture the birds of narratives in the world of eloquence, begin this tale as follows:—

One day the vulture of hunger was soaring in the atmosphere of a Royal-falcon's mind. He left his nest and flew in all directions for the purpose of finding game, until his vision settled on an owl perched on a wall; he immediately pounced upon it, and wanted to lacerate the breast of its life with his beak and talons, and to occupy himself in quenching the conflagration

* *Pillow* is made of rice boiled, the grains being left whole; upon this butter is poured, and sauce. It is eaten with spices, meat, fish or fowl.—Rich. Dict.

of hunger. The owl said: "O Potentate of the altitudes of the air, and of great dignity; though your victorious lordship has drawn the scimitar of execution over the breast of a mean individual like myself, and I am in the act of giving up the ghost, it is scarcely convenient to address Your Highness; but as those who soar in the firmament of intellect have laid it down as a rule that if the noble-minded and liberal meet the poor and the needy, they must not only not injure them but even relieve their necessities. I have a statement to make and with your permission I shall do so." The falcon said: "Speak." The owl continued: "O king exalted like the spheres, may everlasting felicity and constant prosperity always be your obedient companions! Pardon and generosity are qualities of magnanimous and compassionate individuals; every restraint of our inordinate desires is followed by several heavenly blessings; if thy exalted nature resists an impulse of passion, thou wilt soon acquire all thou hast wished.

DISTICH.

Abandon the impulse, thou wilt succeed,
Leave the desire, thy heart will be satisfied.

O Monarch! The object of this exordium is to make you acquainted, of my having a few days ago, when I was overpowered by hunger, caught a sparrow. It was my intention to defile my claws with his blood in order to relieve myself from the cravings of famine, but he said: "Do not kill me, because I am the parent of several small birds, and as their lives depend from my existence, if the latter be destroyed, the volume of theirs will likewise fall to pieces; but if thou restrainest thy desire, God the beneficent donor of all gifts will abundantly reward thee." Accordingly I let go my hold of him, and seeking to please the Almighty, I gave him liberty. I remained in expectation till evening, and when it set in, suddenly a creature like the Symurg descended from the air on the ruin wherein I dwell, and said: "O owl!

HEMISTICH.

To renounce desire, is to obtain it."

And leaving a couple of partridges near me it said: "I am one of the birds of the forest of mercy, my place is in the highest firmament, and whenever a servant becomes on account of his good acts worthy of obtaining a favour, I am commanded to convey it. These two partridges are sent thee in return of that sparrow whose life thou hast spared in resisting thy impulse. This thy deed has been acceptable to the legions dwelling on high, and it has been decided, that I shall bring to this place every evening a pair of partridges from paradise as a reward." I immediately consumed one of them and I found it more delicious than the meat of any animal I had ever tasted." The owl continued to describe and to laud the partridges so much that the falcon's mouth began to water for them.

The owl said: "O king! The portals of the treasury of the Almighty's regard are open to those who are acquainted with the mysteries of compassion and mercy, and various gifts are ready for the humane. If your lordship sheds my blood, the emaciated body of your humble servant will not suffice to fulfil the expectations of my Lord, and these presents brought to me from paradise, will fall to the lot of some unworthy creatures. If your lordship will spare my life I shall every day wait upon my lord with one of those partridges." The falcon replied: "Owl! By these deceitful insinuations thou wishest to escape from my clutches. It is a wise saying: "If an enemy falls into our hands we must not spare him, and we must not give into the snares of falsehood, because antagonists will resort to innumerable tricks to get out of a scrape. I can by no means comply with thy request." The owl rejoined: "God forbid that I should have anything else in view but the increase of the dignity and the glory of my lord. Who am I that I should venture to act with reference to your lordship in any other but the righteous way." The falcon again coveted the partridges of paradise and got up from the breast of the owl, who immo-

diately retreated to his hole as soon as he perceived himself to be at liberty. The falcon however sat down near the entrance of the hole hoping to obtain a celestial partridge. The owl thanked his stars for having escaped with life, but was startled on beholding his enemy outside, expecting the fulfilment of the promise. The owl said: "O lord of the inhabitants of the world what your humble servant has promised cannot take place to-day, because all my relatives and friends have heard that the granary of my life had been struck by the lighting of your lordship's wrath, and have all come to my hut to lament and deplore the catastrophe; but when they perceived me in safety they all began to offer their grateful prayers for your lordship and were greatly rejoicing, they however consumed the partridge with which it was my intention to wait upon my Lord; to-morrow I shall be happy to fulfil my promise if Your Majesty will condescend to approach my humble dwelling." The falcon asked: "By what door will thy relatives leave the place." The owl replied: "Your gracious Majesty is expecting in vain; because it is an axiom in our tribe that when a misfortune befalls one of us, all the others take it as a warning. What has happened to me was a hint to them, and there is no probability that it will remain unheeded by them." As the falcon had become uneasy from hunger, and the partridge was not forthcoming, he intended to go hunting, but as the evening was setting in, and he caught no game, he returned to his cavern and spent the night hungry. When the honey-lotus of the East began to roam in the hunting-grounds of morn, and the crow of night hid itself in the recesses of concealment, the falcon set out on the chase and alighted before the owl's nest; the latter cautiously approached the opening, beheld his enemy lurking in ambush and said: "Large hearted sovereign with august pinions! You are welcome, for your propitious advent has become the occasion of felicity to me, because the rays of condescension of the powerful illuminate the bosoms of the poor!" The falcon said; "Owl! Fulfil thy promise, for I have to-day come to this place to feast on the partridge of paradise. Be quick, you have delayed the matter long enough,

and I have other business to attend to." The owl replied: "O Lord! On account of the blessed verse of the Qorán: "Patience is the key for all difficulties," and because the lamp of that affair cannot be kindled according to your demands, unless it be fed by the oil of patience, I beseech your lordship to wait for a moment, until the eyes of day are opened after the sleep of morning, and the bed of the darkness of night is taken off from the surface of the world." The falcon said: "Owl! Why do you not come out, that we may have some friendly intercourse with each other, because I think I might gain some information from your experience." The owl continued: "O king! I am in possession of several maxims left me by my father, and whenever I failed to observe them or acted contrary to them, I always became obnoxious to fatal consequences. One of them is: that when a man comes in contact with sovereigns he must not become careless and secure, lest he might by an uncivil look, bring ruin upon himself. The farther a man is from those who have authority the safer he will be; and again: "Whoever falls into danger once and comes out of it unscathed, must keep out of it the next time, for if he incurs it a second time, he forfeits his life by his own culpability. No one must act in conformity with the deeds or acts of his enemy, or neglect to observe the manœuvres of his antagonist, or fail in circumspection concerning his own affairs, lest he lose his life in consequence of the machinations of enemies. Poor persons like ourselves who are ignorant of the manners and dispositions of high personages, act well to keep aloof from sovereigns!" The falcon said: "By these subterfuges you mean to elude the promise which you have made, what is your answer?" The owl said: "Lord! The descent of those provisions takes place in the night, whilst you are waiting here, the children of your poor servant, several of whom he has in his nest, soil their beaks and claws from sheer ignorance with the heavenly food as soon as they perceive it, and I think it highly improper to dish up to Your Majesty the leavings of their meal; for this reason I am greatly ashamed, and I think that if your lordship were to remain here during the night your wish would be

gratified, your staying now only augments my confusion." Consequently the falcon was on that day again obliged to return disappointed.

The philomel of the pen of eloquence proceeds in the rose-grove of the compositions of this narrative as follows:—When the falcon left the hole of the owl, the latter meditated within himself, that as he had by his cunning escaped from the clutches of the falcon, he ought now to try how to get altogether rid of so powerful an enemy. He thought that none of the feathered tribe were as intelligent as the crow, and meant to consult him on this subject, therefore he went to the nest of the crow, and addressed him in the following words: "O thou collyrium of the visual organs of discernment and intelligence! I come to ask thy advice because the nails of thy acuteness solve all difficulties." He related his difficulty with the falcon and continued: "I have no other remedy but the shadow of thy protection, I hope thou wilt save me from my troubles." The crow replied: "I have neither the strength nor the power to cope by main force with your enemy, but I am able to do so by way of stratagem. It occurs to my mind that, as I am acquainted with the fox I ought to relate to him this case, and as he is a master of all the tricks of cunning he will be able to remove this difficulty in the handsomest manner."

The owl and the crow went to the dwelling of the fox and after mutual salutations and inquiries for each other's health they informed him of all that had happened. The fox said: "I would be happy to assist you but, by my life! I am entirely unacquainted with the ways of the falcon, and I should like to know what the strength of his body, mind and intellect amount to?" The crow replied: "The falcon is very acute and intelligent, but his greed leads him often into scrapes and dangers." The fox continued: "If that bird is obnoxious to covetousness it can easily be caught in the meshes of astuteness, for it has no worse nor stronger enemy than its own greediness.

HEMISTICH.

Avidity captures the high soaring falcon in its net."

The fox said: "It occurs to my mind that the owl ought in any possible way to bring a partridge from the plain to his nest; I shall also be present there and hide myself in a corner. When the falcon again comes to solicit for his prey, the partridge must be let out and the falcon be allowed to fall upon it; and whilst he is thus engaged, I shall sally forth from my ambush and inflict upon him the deserved punishment." The owl thanked the fox and went in search of a partridge and after meeting one he addressed it as follows:—"O bird of a happy nature, and envy of the pea-fowl of paradise! From thy symmetrical gait the tender fairies take lessons in walking, and the sugar-shedding thrills of thy voice excite confusion in the hearts of all lovers. Your humble servant is about to marry and has invited all kinds of birds to the wedding, and as your place was empty in the assembly, he has himself come to invite you. Great jollity and wonderful sights are going on there, and the pleasing melodies of all the singing birds are rising to the highest sphere of the firmament." The owl continued to flatter the partridge in this strain until it consented, and both entered the nest, the owl keeping watch at the opening, and waiting for the arrival of the falcon. When the partridge looked round he saw an obscure and dirty hole, and no vestige of what the owl had promised: accordingly he said: "Owl! Where is the nuptial throng, and the wedding repast?" The owl rejoined: "They are all gone to convey the bride to this place, but as soon as they arrive, the company will be very joyous." Having thus confined the feet of the partridge with the strings of fraud, he detained him till evening. The fox also arrived and concealed himself, and after some time the falcon made also his appearance at the opening of the owl's nest. When the latter perceived the falcon, he said to the partridge: "Darling! Our friends are coming late, I have some business to attend to; do you go out and look in the direction of the plain, whether you can perceive the wedding-guests approaching?" The unfortunate and simple-minded partridge stepped out of the hole, the falcon thought it was the partridge from paradise, fell upon, killed, and began to devour it; but the fox

likewise came forth from his ambush and slowly and carefully approaching the falcon he killed him for having taken the life of the partridge. Then he took up the corpses of the falcon and of the partridge, and said to the owl: "Your wedding has been to no one as profitable as to myself." He took his prey and went his way.

Often intelligent men of low station overcome by stratagem high but unsuspecting and careless personages in the same way as a little bird captured the gardener in the net of cunning and deception.

STORY XXVIII.

Chroniclers relate that a rich man in the country of Balkh possessed a garden pleasant to behold as the roses on the cheeks of fairies, adorned with various fragrant plants, blossoming flowers, and fruit-bearing trees. In that garden a little bird, called starling, took up its abode and amused itself to throw all the fruits whether they were ripe or not to the ground. Whenever the gardener entered and looked at the damage thus occasioned, the bottom of his heart was stung by the thorn of grief, and the blooming verdure of the spring of his joy became withered by the cold blasts of the autumn of that event. Though he rubbed the hands of regret much on each other and bit the lips of amazement with his teeth, he could not remedy the evil until he spread a net in the haunts of the bird; and when the latter wished according to its usual custom to carry on its ravages, it became a prisoner. When the gardener discovered his luck, he joyfully leapt from his ambush, caught hold of the little bird, intending to dispatch it to the regions of non-existence.

In this emergency the little captive spoke to the gardener as follows:—"Ornament of the world of intelligence! May the paradise of your wishes always be the recipient of various Divine favours! Consider that if you destroy me, the loss will not be repaired, and that he who dies is saved from all the troubles of this world. But as I am to be killed for acts which you deem improper; the love of life impels me to make a statement if you will permit me. After that you may do as you like, but remember that patience is a quality of high-minded, and hastiness one of foolish men." The gardener whose wrath had somewhat abated during the preceding speech, replied: "Before the whirlwind of death blows in the field of your life, you may say anything you like." The little bird continued: "Wise gardener! Be aware that in the west there is an oasis which my tribe inhabits; but I left my relatives and came to this spot. The pleasantness of this garden attracted me, and for a while I reposed myself on the branch of a tree. A nightingale and a lap-wing were sitting together on the top of a date-tree, and a locust was flying towards them which both of them wished to catch; the nightingale however was fortunate enough to get hold of it, but the lap-wing snatched it away from the captor's beak. Hereon the nightingale said: "Lap-wing! Are you not ashamed forcibly to possess yourself of my prey; if you are able why do not you also catch your own game?" The lap-wing replied: "Silence! To get the prey is no honour, but it is one to deprive the hunter of the prey!" The nightingale replied: "This may be true, and I give it up! Lap-wing, I have heard the other birds speaking a great deal about you, and now as we have met, and as your species has in the service of the Lord Solomon (salutation to our prophet and to him) enjoyed greater proximity to him than any other kind of birds, I wish to know what gifts or rewards you may have obtained from him for your account about the city of Saba and for your assistance in other matters?"* The lap-wing replied: "King Solomon has bestowed on our species three gifts: 1st Whenever the earth

* See Chapter 26th of the Qorán, where the details may be found.

is being dug up for water, we are able to tell at what depth it will be found, 2nd, our head has been adorned with the crest of nobility, 3rd, we are acquainted with the qualities of fruits and we know that this year the garden we are just now in, has been subject to a visitation of God, so that whoever eats of any of its fruits must immediately die." Then the lap-wing said to the nightingale: "Has your species been favoured by any gifts?" And the latter replied: "We have also been granted three favours: 1st A beautiful voice and melody, agreeable to all hearers; 2nd We possess the property of being awake in the night, which we enjoy in common with ascetics and pious men. 3rd We have been invested with the gaudy robes of love, and roses have been assigned for our spouses, whose society we enjoy without let or hindrance, and in the aspect of whose heart-ravishing cheeks we perpetually delight."

The little bird continued: "O most intelligent gardener! When I heard from the lap-wing that the fruits of this garden have become deleterious, I made haste to pluck and to throw them down, lest any person might eat them and be injured. Now if you will promise to liberate me, I shall communicate to you three maxims, by means of which you will be happy in this and in the next world, and friends and foes will obey you!" The gardener said: "Speak! The little bird continued: "1st You must never trust persons of a low and uncongenial disposition, 2nd Never believe impossibilities, and 3rd Never repent of anything which you can alter no more; because it is of no use." Accordingly the gardener relaxed his hold, the starling flew away, perched on the next tree, elongated his neck and exclaimed: "O gardener! If you knew what a windfall you have allowed to escape your grasp, you would immediately commit suicide. Verily I have deceived you." The gardener said: "How?" The starling continued: "In my abdomen there is a gem as big as a duck's egg, the like of which exceeds all speculations of intellect, and the equal of which the diver of the regions of imagination has never discovered. Had you obtained possession of that jewel which you lost so easily, you might have lived happily on the gain

during your whole terrestrial existence." When the gardener heard these words he lacerated his robe from top to bottom, strewed the ashes of repentance on his head, and the brambles of confusion and uneasiness sprouted in the wilderness of his heart. As he looked to the right and left how he might again get hold of the starling, the latter flew to a high tree and continued: "As I have now by my cunning escaped from your grasp, I shall not be foolish enough to fall into it again. Do not flatter yourself that you will again be able to get hold of me." The gardener began to weep and heaved every moment deep sighs from the bottom of his heart, but the starling smiled and said: "It is a pity that the name of human being is applied to a silly fellow like yourself. I just communicated to you three maxims all of which you have immediately forgotten. I advised you not to be deceived by mean and uncongenial persons. Why then have you believed my words and have liberated me? I further told you not to believe impossibilities. Then why do you put faith in my words, considering that nothing can be more absurd than that a weak little sparrow like myself should have in his abdomen a gem of the size of a duck's egg? Lastly I advised you not to repent of anything which is irreparable, but you nevertheless moan and lament." After uttering these words the starling disappeared from the sight of the gardener.

In the same way as glass is guarded from a stone and a metallic speculum from rust, confidence ought to be kept away from the brambles and filth of mean dispositions. The heedless man who spreads the umbrella of his friendship over the head of an unworthy individual, and cultivates intimacy with persons of another nature, may fare like the lion who trusted the cat.

STORY XXIX.

The lion was one day seated in the hall of justice and probity surrounded by the princes of rapacious and other animals, and attended on his right as well as on his left by the grandees and viziers of the kingdom; when several mice entered the assembly by a hole in the wall, and on beholding the pomp and splendour of royalty they ran frightened and helter-skelter across the apartment in all directions. The Amyr was highly displeased at the uncivil intrusion, and the chamberlains ineffectually attempted to catch and to punish them. The same outrage was repeated the next day, and on several other occasions; so that the Amyr said to his magnates: "This impudence of the mice is highly displeasing to me, and you must put an end to it." Hereon a certain courtier rose, kissed the threshold of supplication and after professing his allegiance to the exalted throne, spoke as follows:— "May it please Your Majesty! There is a beast, named cat, which is by nature an implacable enemy of mice. If one of that species were in the palace, no mouse would ever enter it for fear of his talons." The Amyr asked: "What is the shape and figure of that animal?" The courtier continued: "It is smaller than a fox, but it is nevertheless of agreeable form." The Amyr continued: "Then why has it not during these times sought the honour of paying its allegiance to our carpet, because under the protection of our government it would have attained high dignity and would have enjoyed various favours." The courtier replied: "When Your Majesty's exalted father departed from the prairie of existence to the cane-brakes of annihilation, and your Lordship's reign was inaugurated, orders were promulged for the appearance of all tame and wild animals of the plains, mountains, valleys, deserts and of all countries, at the foot of the throne of royalty, that after reviewing them, all who might by their strength, beauty, or other laud-

able qualities be found worthy to be enrolled in the service of this august government, should at all times remain present in attendance; but on the just mentioned occasion a number of animals found not to be very worthy, obtained leave again to depart and to take charge of the surveillance of roads, deserts and other places. Accordingly many beasts were again discharged, and on account of the smallness of his stature the cat was one of their number, and was thus deprived of the honour to serve Your Majesty. Not being able to encounter the hardships of the desert, the cat took refuge with man, but we hear from our spies that he is greatly distressed by the persecutions he has to endure." The Amyr said: "If this be the case it will be proper to send for him to remove the mice. Who is there devoted enough to our service to take on himself this commission?" Whilst one of the grandees was expatiating on the readiness which all were anxious to display in the service of His Majesty, a monkey returned who had been sent as a courier to the army of the frontiers and had brought a favourable report. The king was pleased and exclaimed: "To whatever duty we have appointed the monkey he had always fulfilled it to our satisfaction. Indeed one of the blessings of Sultans is to possess faithful servants, who are never transgressing the laws of gratitude and devotion to their benefactors; accordingly we appoint the monkey Jandal to bring the cat and to carry a letter to him." Then the Amyr dictated the following:—

Letter to the Cat.

"Firmán of the lord of one hundred Farasangs by one hundred Farasangs in the desert of Khowarizm, whose name is Qahqaras Dzygum Bahádur from the heat of whose flame of bravery the whales tremble at the bottom of the ocean, and on account of whose countless armies the sun is disturbed like a drop of mercury.

As the Sultans of this world have been appointed to their stations by the courts of eternity, and are by their innate merciful disposition always ready to succour the needy; therefore the

king, having heard that the cat was on account of the prevalence of brigandage in the wildernesses, and on account of his own powerless condition, compelled to take refuge with the tyrannical and faithless human race and is sighing in the bonds of slavery; His Majesty is desirous to liberate him, and has despatched the monkey Jandal who is one of the princes of his race and is distinguished by intellect and valour, to bring the cat to the royal presence, who is on the receipt of this Firmán immediately and without hesitation to obey the summons, in order that his position may be ameliorated."

The monkey carried away this letter and returned in a short time with the cat, who, when he was conducted into the august assembly, made his obeisance, and spoke as follows:—

VERSES.

"Thanks be to God that by the favour of the king,
The rose-grove of my luck is blooming.
The event for which I longed,
Is at last fulfilled!

In the same way as all sick persons wish for health, and the blind desire to recover their sight, so I have for years, nay during centuries been anxious to become a slave of this threshold! But as weakness and impotency is an obstacle to the attainment of any kind of benefits, I was excluded from the honour of serving Your Majesty and fell into the bondage of the ungrateful human race, spending my time with moist eyes and dry lips, until my weak arrows of supplication struck the target of response!" The Amyr replied: "Unhappy cat! Miseries accompany all inordinate desires in this world, and had you not in consequence of your vain aspirations left this government, and had you not entered the service of the human race you would never have had to suffer any persecutions.

DISTICH.

Whoever leaves this place,
Comes again with a disappointed face.

At any rate, be thankful that your grief is ended! We hear that you are an enemy of mice, therefore we have ordered you to come, and hereby appoint you to punish them as you like." The cat replied: "Every wish of Your Majesty is a command to me! Mice are very noxious, and if it were not for our species, there is no telling what extraordinary ravages the mice might commit." The Amyr asked: "What is the origin and cause of your enmity to mice?" The cat replied: "O Amyr! When the deluge set in, the Lord Noah was ordered to go into the ark and to take into it one pair of every kind of animals, lest they might become extinct. As the ship was very crowded, a great quantity of filth accumulated, and produced such a stench, that all the people requested Noah to pray for the removal of the calamity. Accordingly he raised his hands in supplication to the courts of the Omnipotent Sovereign, when immediately a hog was created which began to devour the offals, so that the people were delivered from the stench. But the evaporations of the brain of the hog gave birth to the mouse, which began on account of the wicked disposition of that species, immediately to gnaw the sides of the vessel so that the water found entrance into it. This evil it was impossible to remedy, and all the people were distressed; accordingly Noah again poured forth his orisons, and after he had by Divine command stroked with his blessed hand the forehead of the lion, a cat issued from it, which attacked the mice and destroyed them; so that our enmity dates from that time." The Amyr smiled and said: "In this manner the cat has established the ties of relationship between us."

In short, the cat extirpated the mice and was on that account, enrolled among the number of favourite courtiers. After some time had elapsed the cat became gradually more and more ambitious, and according to his innate meanness he began to domineer over the other officials and to wound their feelings. As however this member of the feline species had become the chief favourite of the Amyr, all the courtiers were afraid to manifest their displeasure openly; but secretly they reasoned with each other as follows:—"It is many years since we faith-

fully serve the king and have never attempted to abuse our power; and now the cat who had on account of his despicable person never enjoyed favour in court, but was living on the crumbs from the tables of men, has become our tyrant. O what a fool our own king must be not to be able to distinguish a thorn from a rose nor a potsherd from a jewel. Alas, for the time we have lost in his service; we must try to remedy this evil.

The leopard who was the chief officer of the palace said: "The fox is a master of cunning and roguery, we must consult him on the subject of removing the cat and of saving ourselves." Accordingly the panther and the leopard paid a visit to the fox and after exchanging the usual compliments they spoke as follows:—"You are a great philosopher, and able to solve all difficulties; therefore we have come to consult you how the cat is to be got rid of?" The fox rubbed the sleeve of falsehood over the eyes of cunning, opened the book of stratagems, examined all the chapters and paragraphs of it, and said: "Beloved friends! The whirl-wind of this calamity has injured also the field of my circumstances, and this dagger has wounded also my heart, so that I am likewise anxious to accomplish the ruin of the culprit. But from whatever side I look at the matter I consider the poor cat to be innocent in this matter, because the torch of the condescension of great personages is able to throw sparks of pride and ambition into every heart, and favourites of kings soon lose the reins of self-possession from their hands. The fault is with the Amyr who has disregarded the injunctions of prudence and has bestowed his confidence on so unworthy an individual. You must go to the root of the evil and so demolish the whole tree that we may ever afterwards live free from any apprehensions of this kind. For supposing you to be able to get rid of the cat to-day, what security have we that our silly Amyr will not replace him to-morrow by an individual of a still more despicable kind, who will persecute us, and renew all our wounds? The impudence of a servant is the result of the carelessness of the master, and the misbehaviour of a son is the sequel of the leniency of his father. Therefore we must at all events deprive the Amyr

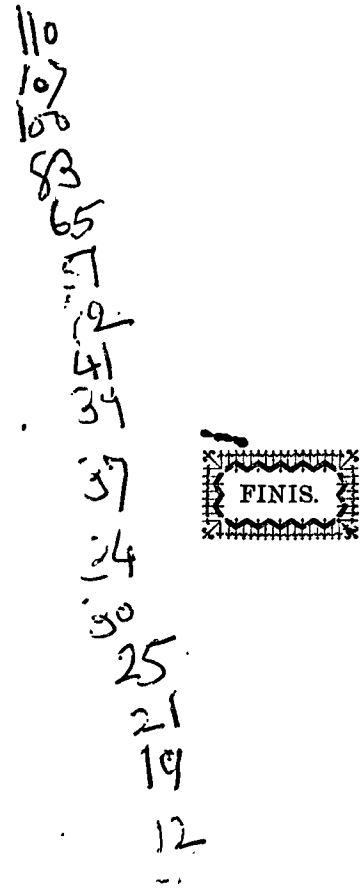
of life, or else we shall always live in distress." They replied: "We are unequal to accomplish so portentous a deed; and in case a project of this kind should be divulged we are sure to pay with our lives for it." The fox continued: "Be not afraid; for I shall not risk anything before having made all the necessary preparations. I have no access to the court and can therefore not begin any intrigues with the cat; and I can in no other manner accomplish my project and capture the cat in the same net. You may however secretly inform the cat that the auspicious Anka who can predict future events, has come from heaven, and that if you knew where he can be found you would be glad to make him a visit to ascertain your fate. After you convey this information to the cat I shall secretly visit him, pretend great friendship and attachment to his interests, and endeavour to carry out our intention." In this manner the fox continued to speak for some time until he had completely put his two friends off their guard, who relaxed the strings of precaution, and further asked: "O cunning old fellow of what use will be your meeting the cat?" The fox continued: "Brothers! In the seraglio of expedients many belles are ready at hand, but the curtain of cautiousness is not impudently to be lifted from the countenance of the secrets of brides. I have not perfect confidence in your taciturnity and you might reveal the secret, which would entail only evil consequences to us all. If you will swear an oath on the book of stratagems, I shall tell you why I wish to meet the cat." They agreed. Accordingly the fox brought forth the 'key of roguery' from the praying-carpet of cunning and placed it before the leopard and panther, both of whom performed with religious awe and piety the sacred ablution together with the fox and having their fore-paws on the 'key of roguery' they swore an oath not to reveal the secret to be confided to them by the fox. Then the latter said: "I possess a few of the mustachios of Khoarizm-beetles, the property whereof is, that as soon as the lion swallows them he immediately dies. I mean to give those hairs to the cat, which he is to administer to the lion as best he can."

In short, all three agreed to the above proposal. After that the leopard and panther conversed in the hearing of the cat of the advent of the Anka and manifested great anxiety to ascertain their future destinies. The cat took the bait and was ruminating what kind of animal it could be which is of so aimable a disposition. Then the two first mentioned individuals again returned to the fox and informed him what progress they had made; and he requested them to let him know when the king leaves the palace and the cat is at leisure. Such an opportunity happened soon; and the fox investing himself with the robes of cant and hypocrisy, entered the palace. When the glances of the cat alighted on the form of a strange animal, he wished to flee, but the fox exclaimed: "Heedless individual! Miss not the blessings of the Anka of happiness, and allow not this favourable opportunity to escape, because my presence is by every one considered as a happy augury. I am the exalted Anka of happy omen, acquainted with all the secrets of past and of future times!" As the cat had heard the Anka mentioned by the leopard and the panther, he was very glad at his arrival, rose, prostrated himself at the feet of the fox and said: "Exalted potentate! My life is at your service! I have heard of your excellent disposition! Would you condescend to throw a glance at the future of my life, and inform me what I may expect?" The fox looked towards the sky, murmured something, breathed in four directions, gnashed his teeth, foamed at the mouth, yawned, rubbed his hands, shook his head, and said: "Alas and woe! Verily a brigand is sitting in the path of your life, and only five days of it are remaining!" The cat became very distressed on hearing this news, and said: "O Anka of the west, your prophecy distresses me. Can you help me?" The fox replied: "Weak animal! This tyrannical lion has brought you here to extirpate the mice. Now however the king of the mice has in the deserts of Arabia collected a vast army by which to avenge the death of his son; and all the mice of the inhabited world are going to join him. Now if all the mice of this place go away, the Amyr will no longer have any need of you, but will imme-

diately kill you. Have you not heard that kings show favours to their inferiors only as long as they are in want of them, but that they abandon them as soon as they have no longer any use for them. This tyrant has enticed you away from the human species, but has himself caused the death of many of your own." At these words the cat began to shudder, and said: "O glorious Anka! I adjure you by your exalted dignity to tell me how I may elude that event; for I am greatly attached to life." The fox yawned again and said: "Your safety depends from the lion, if anything befalls him you may escape, but if not, you will surely be killed by him." The cat began to weep bitterly and said: "What is there to hinder the lion from meeting with any disease for a hundred years to come?" The fox again yawned and said: "As it is a virtue to aid the weak and to succour the distressed against the powerful, I shall give you a few hairs from the mustachios of Khoarizm-beetles which you must put into the food of the lion, because as soon as he consumes any of it he will immediately die, and you will be safe. But if you wish at that moment to disappear from the eyes of all, so that no mishap at all may befall you on account of that deed, you must eat the left eye of the lion;" and handing the mustachios of the beetles to the cat he said: "Now I return to heaven!" and departed.

The cat was melancholy and feared that something untoward might happen. Meanwhile the king returned in the evening and went to bed; and it was customary to place some fawn-meat near him, that he might take a bite in the morning. This was done also at the present time, and when a portion of the night had elapsed, the cat secretly mixed up the mustachios of beetles with the meat and retired to a corner. In the morning when the lion awoke, he eat a little of the meat, but the poison immediately took effect, so that he fell into the agony of death, roared a few times and expired. The cat jumped on the head of the lion to dig out his eye, when all the attendants of the palace who awoke from the bellowing of the Amyr, ran into the apartment and on beholding the cat in that position they exclaimed: "Remember what kindness the Amyr had shown

to this ungrateful and mean wretch whilst he was alive; and now as he has died the scoundrel has dug out his eye and is eating it!" Hereon they all rushed upon the cat and tore him to pieces with blows, with their teeth and with their claws.



Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 18 July, 2018